

WEST INDIA COLONIES:
SLAVE INSURRECTION.

RETURN to ADDRESSES to His MAJESTY, dated 9 & 15 March 1832;—for,

Address 9 March 1832:

COPIES of a CIRCULAR DESPATCH addressed by Viscount Goderich to the Governors of *West India* Colonies, on 3d June 1831, and of a PROCLAMATION enclosed therein, to be issued by the Governors in the event of any excitement or false impressions being observed amongst the SLAVES; and also, COPIES of any CORRESPONDENCE which passed thereon between Viscount Goderich and the Governor of *Jamaica*.

COPIES of the DESPATCHES from the Governor of *Jamaica* to Viscount Goderich, conveying information to the latest period of the recent REBELLION amongst the SLAVES of that Colony.

Of the PROCLAMATION issued by the Governor in consequence of that REBELLION.

Address 15 March 1832:

COPIES of any DESPATCHES which may have been received from other of the *West India* Colonies besides *Jamaica*, in answer to Lord Goderich's Circular Despatch of the 3d June 1831; and a Copy of the Circular Despatch addressed by Viscount Goderich to the Governors of the *West India* Colonies (with the exception of *Jamaica* and *Honduras*), dated 10th March 1832.

Colonial Department,
Downing-street,
16 March 1832.

HOWICK.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
16 March 1832.

Dec 21, 2007

Spec. Coll. / Anti-slavery

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WEST INDIA COLONIES:

SLAVE INSURRECTION.

— No. 1. —

Copy of a CIRCULAR DESPATCH from Viscount Goderich to the Governors
of the *West India* Colonies; enclosing a Proclamation.

(Circular.)

Downing-street, 3d June 1831.

SIR,

DESPATCHES which have been received at this Department from the Governors of some of His Majesty's West India colonies, confirm the statements which have reached me through less authentic sources, as to the excitement which prevails in the minds of the slaves in some of those islands.

Respecting the origin of these discontents, the precise form in which they have been manifested, and the degree of danger to be apprehended from them, the intelligence before me is imperfect. Satisfied, however, as His Majesty's Ministers are of the existence of some sufficient cause for uneasiness on the subject, they have not deemed it right to wait the arrival of more minute details before they adopt such precautionary measures as it is in their power to take. The distance which separates this kingdom from the colonies would probably render any interposition from His Majesty's Government useless to remedy, though it might be of some effect in averting, mischief.

In the year 1824, a similar cause of alarm existed in some parts of the West Indies, and a Proclamation was at that time issued by his late Majesty's commands, and in His name, warning the slaves of the danger they would incur by any violation of the law, and pointing out to them the motives which should induce them to yield a cheerful obedience to the authority of their owners. On that occasion the Proclamation attributed to them an opinion that they had been actually enfranchised by the Legislature of Great Britain, and that the enjoyment of the boon was withholden from them by their masters. Whether any similar misconception could with truth be ascribed to them at present, I have not such information as would enable me to judge; I, however, have received His Majesty's commands to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the Proclamation of 1824, and to signify to you His pleasure that it be again published in His name, and as emanating directly from Him. If, however, before you receive this despatch, the late occasions for alarm shall have subsided, and the minds of the slaves shall apparently have returned to their habitual state, you will abstain from publishing the Proclamation. Such an act would, in that event, be worse than useless, and might kindle the very excitement which, under other circumstances, it would contribute to allay. For the reason already noticed, it is not impossible that the preamble or introductory passages of this instrument may be found inapplicable to the actual state of affairs, and that the present tendency to disturbance may have been engendered by some other misconception than that of supposing that slavery had actually been abolished. If such an opinion does not really prevail, it would not only be a violation of truth, but an act of the most evident imprudence to ascribe it in so solemn a manner to the slaves. To a certain degree, therefore, it becomes inevitable to entrust to yourself the power of modifying the introductory language of the Proclamation, so as to render it conformable with the real facts of the case: you will, however, introduce no such alteration, unless it should be distinctly necessary, and you will observe the utmost circumspection in avoiding the use of any exaggerated terms, either in describing the state of mind which exists among the slaves, or in referring to the causes in which their discontents may be supposed to have originated. It would be superfluous to explain the grounds or the necessity of this caution.

WEST INDIA COLONIES :

If the necessity for issuing such a Proclamation should arise, I trust that an admonition proceeding thus directly from the King would not be without a salutary effect on all classes of His Majesty's subjects in the colony under your command. It may contribute to assure those of free condition that their safety and welfare are the objects of His Majesty's constant solicitude, while it may impress the slaves with a wholesome conviction, that, in return for his unceasing exertions for the improvement of their condition, the King expects, and will if necessary enforce, a due submission to the laws under which they live, and the performance of the various duties towards their owners which that law imposes on them. You will not be wanting in the use of the opportunities which your station and influence in the colony may give you for dispelling any illusions under which any class of the King's subjects there may labour, as to the real designs entertained by the Government of this country, or as to the principles by which they are really guided. You will with equal confidence deny the existence of any purpose to disturb, by abrupt and hasty measures, the present relations of society in the colonies, and of any intention of abandoning that course of progressive improvement which has had for its avowed object the ultimate extinction of slavery throughout the dominions of the British Crown. It is impossible to deny or to conceal the many and great difficulties with which His Majesty's Government have to contend, in pursuing the path thus prescribed to them by the resolutions of both Houses of Parliament, no less than by His Majesty's commands. Those difficulties would be enhanced to such a degree as to become nearly insuperable, if, on the one hand, the proprietors should refuse their cheerful co-operation, or if, on the other hand, the slaves should be goaded by impatience, or excited by ill councils, to seek, through any desperate and lawless enterprizes, that improvement of their condition which His Majesty and Parliament are pledged to obtain for them. The responsibility for the ill success of these moderate measures must rest upon those by whose prejudices or passions the fair trial of so momentous an experiment may be defeated.

I have, &c.
(signed) GODERICH.

PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS it has been represented to Us, that the slaves in some of Our West India Colonies and of Our Possessions on the continent of South America, have been erroneously led to believe that orders had been sent out by Us for their emancipation; and whereas such belief has produced acts of insubordination, which have excited Our highest displeasure: We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation; and We do hereby declare and make known that the slave population in Our said colonies and possessions will forfeit all claim on Our protection, if they shall fail to render entire submission to the laws, as well as dutiful obedience to their masters; and We hereby charge and command all Our Governors of Our said West India Colonies and Possessions to give the fullest publicity to this Our Proclamation, and to enforce, by all the legal means in their power, the punishment of those who may disturb the tranquillity and peace of Our said Colonies and Possessions.

JAMAICA.

— No. 2. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of Belmore to Viscount Goderich.

My Lord,

King's House, Jamaica, 20th July 1831.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch, marked circular, of the date stated in the margin, respecting the excitement which appears to have taken place in some of the Windward Islands, amongst the slave population, and which your Lordship supposes may have extended to Jamaica.

Had I received your Lordship's despatch a month ago, I should not have hesitated in declaring my opinion that any proclamation or admonition to the slaves in this island was entirely uncalled for; but circumstances have lately occurred, in

my

3 June 1831.

my opinion of no very serious nature, which have created a certain portion of alarm. It is however with great regret I have to notice to your Lordship the frequent attempts at conflagration which have lately been practised in the city of Kingston : the local authorities have hitherto failed in all their endeavours either to detect the perpetrators of these acts or to discover the motives which actuate them, but no doubt remains that they are the work of incendiaries, as in several instances the combustible matter used for ignition has been found unconsumed. No information has however reached me, by which I am enabled to connect these acts of atrocity with the proceedings which have occasioned alarm in the more remote parts of the island, and I know they are considered by many as insulated acts of mischief, divested of any combined purpose ; and as such, at present, I am inclined to regard them. My own opinion of the slave population is, that collectively they are sound and well disposed.

Accounts in the public papers will inform your Lordship of various parochial meetings which have already assembled, and the resolutions they have adopted. These transactions certainly manifest considerable excitement and alarm ; but in my apprehension are more calculated to disturb the minds of the slaves than any report they may casually have heard of something being intended for their benefit, which their owners endeavour to withhold from them.

I have the honour to enclose your Lordship the copy of a petition from the parish of Trelawny, the only document relative to these transactions which has been presented to me ; and agreeably to your Lordship's instructions, I denied "the existence of any purpose to disturb by abrupt and hasty measures the present relations of society in the colonies, and of any intention of abandoning that course of progressive improvement, which has had for its avowed object the ultimate extinction of slavery throughout the dominions of the British Crown." It is hardly necessary for me to observe to your Lordship that it is not my intention to assemble the legislature before the usual period.

In the course of a few days I purpose to make a tour to the north side of the island, and I will take particular pains to make myself acquainted with the state of public feeling, both as respects the slave population and the other classes of the community ; and if I find that there is a necessity for tranquillizing the alarm of the white inhabitants, or of putting down any rising disposition to insubordination on the part of the slaves, I shall lose no time in issuing a mild but firm proclamation in His Majesty's name, according to the spirit and tenor of the document which accompanied your Lordship's despatch.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

(signed) BELMORE.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable *Somerset Lowry*, Earl of *Belmore*,
Captain General and Governor in Chief of the Island of Jamaica, &c. &c. &c.

THE PETITION of the Freeholders and others, Inhabitants of the parish
of Trelawny, humbly prays :

That your Petitioners consider that by the proceedings threatened to be adopted by the Imperial Parliament against the West India Colonies, if carried into effect, will put their lives and properties in immediate danger.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that your Excellency will be pleased to call together the members of our local legislature at as early a period as possible, to afford them timely opportunity to adopt measures which may avert such a calamity.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c. &c.

(signed) *Frederick Lamont*, Chairman.

— No. 3. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to the Earl of *Belmore*.

My Lord,

Downing-street, 7 September 1831.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch of the 20th of July last, in which you inform me that frequent attempts at conflagration had been made in the city of Kingston, and that the local authorities had failed in all their endeavours, either to detect the perpetrators of these acts, or to discover the motives which had actuated them. Whilst in common with your Lordship I deeply regret these occurrences, I have had great satisfaction in receiving your Lordship's assurance that no information had reached you by which you were enabled to connect these acts of atrocity with the proceedings which had occasioned alarm in the more remote parts of the island, and that your own opinion of the slave population is that, collectively, they are sound and well disposed.

As your Lordship had anticipated, I learned through the ordinary channels of information, that various parochial meetings had been held, at which great excitement and irritation had been manifested; and I do not doubt the justness of the opinion which your Lordship was led to form, that these proceedings were more calculated to disturb the minds of the slaves than any report they might casually have heard of something being intended for their benefit, which their owners endeavoured to withhold from them.

The answer which you returned to the only petition which was presented to you, praying that you would call together the Assembly, appears to me to have been judicious; and I approve of the intention which you entertained of proceeding to the north side of the island, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of feeling there, and of being guided by it on the question of issuing a proclamation.

I have, &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

— No. 4. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich*.

My Lord,

King's House, Jamaica, 4th August 1831.

REFERRING your Lordship to my despatch of 20th ultimo, I have great satisfaction in acquainting your Lordship that nothing has occurred here to manifest the least uneasiness or excitement among the slaves. I have, however, thought it proper to transmit to the chief magistrates of the several parishes, as a measure of precaution, an extract from your Lordship's despatch, of which the enclosed is a copy; and I have desired that every publicity should be given to it, in order to remove any erroneous impression which the violent resolutions passed at several parochial meetings might make on the community at large.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

BELMORE.

Sir,

King's House, 29th July 1831.

I AM commanded by his Excellency the Governor to enclose an extract of a despatch from Lord Goderich, disclaiming in the most distinct manner any intention on the part of His Majesty's Government to adopt any measures which may have the effect of interfering with the spirit of the resolutions of the House of Commons of 1823, relative to the ultimate extinction of slavery in His Majesty's colonies.

His Excellency trusts that this explicit declaration of His Majesty's Government, will remove any alarm or apprehension which some of the parochial resolutions may have excited in the minds of the community at large.

With a view, therefore, of allaying such uneasiness, his Excellency requests you will give the greatest publicity to the enclosed document.

I have, &c.

To the several Custodes.

(signed) W. Bullock.

SLAVE INSURRECTION.

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Extract of a DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to the Earl of *Belmore*.

" You will, with equal confidence, deny the existence of any purpose to disturb, by abrupt and hasty measures, the present relations of society in the colonies, and of any intention of abandoning that course of progressive improvement, which has had for its avowed object the ultimate extinction of slavery throughout the dominions of the British Crown."

Sir,

King's House, 30th July 1831.

REFERRING you to my letter of yesterday, his Excellency the Governor has directed me to express to you in a more private manner his request that you will endeavour to make yourself acquainted with the general conduct of the slaves in your parish; and should any circumstances arise to require the adoption of further measures, in order to remove any erroneous opinions they may have received of the designs of His Majesty's Government, you will be pleased to give his Excellency the earliest intimation of it.

In making the communication to you, his Excellency desires you will understand, that he places the most perfect confidence in the good conduct of the slaves; and he only suggests a vigilance, which is at all times more or less necessary, but more particularly so when discussions have taken place which are liable to misconstruction or misrepresentation.

To the several Custodes.

I have, &c.

(signed)

W. Bullock.

— No. 5.—

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich*.

My Lord,

King's House, 6th September 1831.

REFERRING to my despatch to your Lordship of 4th ultimo, I have now the honour to inform your Lordship that parochial meetings have been very generally held, at many of which violent and intemperate resolutions have been entered into.

Although in some parishes committees have been appointed for the purpose of corresponding with other districts, and even have proceeded so far as to nominate delegates, still there seems to be no regular combination nor any direct object, and I think it more than probable that all these projects will die with the momentary feeling of displeasure which gave them birth.

I enclose for your Lordship's perusal, a printed paper, containing most of the parochial resolutions, which will put your Lordship in possession of their general tendency.

I have, &c.

(signed)

BELMORE.

Sir,

King's House, 5th September 1831.

His Excellency the Governor has observed with great concern, in the public prints, reports of resolutions entered into at parochial meetings, of an unusual nature, some of them proposing a meeting of delegates for the purpose of advising measures for the public security, and having a tendency to usurp those functions which reside in the House of Assembly as the constitutional organ of the public.

It must be unnecessary to state to you that his Excellency has no desire to interfere with the freedom of public discussion whilst it is confined within legitimate bounds, but his Excellency is determined to resist every attempt that may be made to dictate measures to the legislature, or the establishment of any separate control unknown to the constitution.

You will be pleased therefore to direct your best attention to the proceedings of these committees; and should you be of opinion that any of them are liable to the objection I have stated, you will adopt immediate measures for putting a stop to them.

I have, &c.

(signed)

W. Bullock.

Honourable Mr. Attorney-General.

MEETING of the Inhabitants of St. Thomas-in-the-East.

Morant Bay, August 8, 1831.

At a numerous and respectable Meeting of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, convened by public Advertisement, in the Court-house, this day;

John Mackenzie, Esq. in the Chair;

It was resolved unanimously,

That with the clearest evidence before our eyes of the utter groundlessness of the representations circulated in England regarding the condition and treatment of our slaves, we cannot but regret, and most strongly deprecate, the precipitate, indiscreet and alarming declarations made in Parliament by the present Ministers of the Crown, of their determination to legislate upon those representations, for the internal government of this and the other West Indian islands, and to enforce the measure by adding to burthens, already so overwhelming and ruinous that landed property, instead of giving any return of rent or profit, is involving the unfortunate proprietors in annual debt.

That the proposed measure is in direct violation of the right secured by charter to the people of this island, whereby it is distinctly and solemnly stipulated that they shall be reputed to be, and shall be, free denizens of England, and shall have the same privileges, to all intents and purposes, as the subjects of England.

That the most valuable privilege enjoyed by the people of England, under its free and happy constitution, consists in the well-designed and acknowledged principle, that taxation, legislation and representation are inseparable; and as this privilege belongs equally to the people of Jamaica, so are they by right as fully entitled to make laws for their own government, by their own representatives, as the people of England are by theirs.

That any attempt to deprive us of a right so essential to the protection of our lives and property, and which we have from the first settlement of the island to the present hour enjoyed (whether by the sword, or by a system of robbery under the name of fiscal regulations), will be resisted by every means in our power, and to the last extremity; that if destroyed we are to be, England may have the honour and glory of the deed, but that we ourselves may stand acquitted of having been accessory to our own destruction.

That never can the West Indian colonists hesitate between resistance in a just cause, however unequal the contest, or submission to the merciless fangs of a bigotted faction, who most basely revile and persecute us; nay, who thirst for our very blood, as evinced by the desire expressed in their frantic publications to see the knife at our throats, to stand by and cheer on the blacks to our destruction.

That yielding to no class of His Majesty's subjects in loyalty, or in affection to that land with which we are united by so many endearing ties, we yet must, if driven to the desperate alternative, look to Self-preservation.

That while it is our fixed and unalterable determination to stand or fall with our rights as British subjects, we deem it due to ourselves to declare, in reference to the scandalous calumnies circulated against us in England, that as regards the slaves this meeting most cordially join in the sentiments expressed by the House of Commons, that their condition should be meliorated as fast as is practicable, consistently with their own well-being, and with the rights of property; both of which objects are fortunately dependent upon one principle, viz. the possession of a sufficient power of control by the master, to maintain that subordination and order, which is alike necessary to the well-being of the slaves themselves, as it is to the rights of property, but which it is clearly impossible that persons resident in England, ignorant of the capabilities, habits and dispositions of the negroes, can be competent to regulate.

That it is the wish of this meeting that the members for the parish do, on all occasions support such melioration of the condition of the slaves, as shall not be incompatible with the maintenance of necessary authority, without which no state of society can exist.

That although fully convinced from our knowledge of the slave population, that emancipation in their present state would be far more a curse than a blessing to them, we nevertheless (having no more predilection for slavery than our brethren in

in England) are ready and willing that the experiment be tried, by those who profess to be better judges, upon their first paying us that fair compensation for our property, to which in reason and justice we are entitled, before passing the management of it out of our own hands.

That viewing the visionary schemes of the abolitionists (however well meant on the part of many real benevolent individuals) as endangering the safety of all we hold dear in life, and as death is preferable to a miserable, lingering state of existence, so is it better for the colonies, if doomed they are to destruction, at once to meet their fate, than continue the victims of endless suspense—of such ever-changing measures and proceedings as have put an end to all confidence in property, and which at the present moment threaten its very existence, by exciting in the minds of the ignorant slaves a delusion of the most dangerous and alarming tendency.

That as all the former petitions and memorials of the colonists have passed unheeded and unattended to, and as, instead of obtaining relief, we are threatened with new measures of coercion, it appears to us advisable, as a last effort, that deputations from this and the other islands should proceed to England, to lay our unparalleled grievances and distresses at the foot of the Throne, assert our rights as British subjects, and obtain either an acknowledgment or denial of them.

That John Cargill, John Ross, John Mackenzie and Alexander Barclay, esqrs., be a committee to meet the gentlemen who may be appointed by the other parishes, to carry into effect the object of the preceding resolutions; and that this parish will cheerfully bear its proportion of the expense.

That the gentlemen of colour present at this meeting most cordially join in these resolutions, considering, as they do, their interest and that of the white people of the colony to be inseparable.

That the above resolutions be inserted in the county papers for one month, and once in the Kingston daily papers; and that the island agent be requested to give them publicity in Great Britain, in the manner he considers best calculated to promote their object.

That the chairman be requested to sign these resolutions on the part of the meeting.

John Mackenzie, Chairman.

The chair having been vacated, John Cargill, esq. was called thereto, and the cordial thanks of the meeting voted to the chairman.

A MEETING of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Parish of St. Mary took place at the Court-house, Manning's Town, on Saturday the 23d July 1831, to take into consideration the present alarming crisis of West India affairs, and to adopt such measures as may be thought most expedient to avert the evils that appear to be impending over us.

His Honour the Custos was called to the Chair.

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to:—

Resolved, That we have heard with indignation and dismay the unfounded and treasonable assertions of a Member in debate in the House of Commons, that the coloured people of this island were possessed of 70,000 slaves, whom they were ready to emancipate, and to give their aid to compel the whites to do the same, in which they might be joined by the 2,000 British troops paid for by this island specially for the purpose of keeping those slaves in subordination; and that these assertions and insinuations were not only not denied, but rather supported by several members of His Majesty's Government.

Resolved, That the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise the rates of duties on colonial produce, bespeaks insanity or total ignorance of general or colonial policy. Intolerable duties may and will put an end to the production of any article, but will never oblige free men, of common sense, to adopt measures that must tend to annihilate both their properties and lives.

Resolved, That the oppressive war duties and encouragement given by His Majesty's Government to the produce of those foreign colonies who still maintain the

slave trade in its utmost horrors, are highly unjust and inhuman, and have reduced the British sugar planter to beggary, as few estates can do more than disburse the contingent charges of cultivation.

Resolved, That in justice we ought to be heard, or be convinced that those who attempt to legislate for us have, by a fair and impartial investigation, made themselves acquainted with the subject, and have not been governed by the garbled, false and infamous representations of interested and infuriated lunatics; that if the Government and people of England do not wish to continue to participate in "the deadly sin" which they have themselves originated, and grown rich by continuing against the wishes of the colonists, they ought in common justice to refund the money obtained from us, or if they cannot (which we believe), they ought to leave us to our own resources, by absolving us from our allegiance, and not endeavour, by their acts and treasonable language, to excite those slaves, whom they have sold to us, to rise up in rebellion and rob us of our property and lives, which must inevitably happen if the same system now encouraged by His Majesty's Government be persevered in.

Resolved, That the legislature of this island, warmly supported by the people, have ever evinced a desire to forward the wishes of His Majesty's Government in ameliorating the situation of the slaves, and in promoting their improvement, so as to fit them for a state of emancipation as far as from their local knowledge they could venture, consistently with the preservation of property and the welfare of the slaves themselves, who would most certainly be plunged into worse than African barbarism, if the hasty and ill-digested measures of wrong-headed enthusiasts (who seem unfortunately to direct the proceeding of Government, and are totally ignorant of the real situation of affairs in this community) were adopted.

Resolved, That the history of all countries, in all ages, and particularly of Great Britain, has shown the power of man driven to despair by unjust oppression, and that might has not always prevailed against right.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to correspond with any other committees that may be chosen by the different parishes of this island, to deliberate upon and adopt such measures as may seem best calculated to avert calamities so tremendously productive to the colonists in particular, and to the empire at large.

Resolved, That the people of colour at this meeting unanimously declare themselves to be embodied with the white class of His Majesty's subjects, and consequently their liberties, rights and properties are identified with the whites, and they are determined to repel any unconstitutional measures that may be taken against those rights and liberties.

Abraham Hodgson, Chairman.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting are due to the Custos for convening and presiding over the same, and that his honour be requested to sign the above resolutions, and to adopt the best means of making them as public as possible, the expense of which we pledge ourselves to make good.

A General Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Parish of Manchester, holden at the Court-house, Mandeville, on Tuesday, the 2d day of August 1831, to take into consideration the present state of affairs in the West Indies, and adopt such measures as should be deemed most expedient for averting the evils that appear to be impending over us.

Robert Crawford being called to the Chair;

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to :—

Resolved,

1st. That in assembling here this day we are influenced by an earnest desire to call the attention of His Majesty's Ministers to the jeopardous situation of these colonies, and the unparalleled state of difficulty and danger in which we feel ourselves placed by the relentless hatred of a party of our fellow subjects in the mother country, who, under the cloak of religion and philanthropy, are misleading His Majesty's Government in order to accomplish our destruction.

2d. The

2d. The particular points to which we are desirous of drawing the attention of His Majesty's Ministers are as follows :—1st. That an inquiry be instituted by the appointment of competent persons to investigate into the real condition of our slave population, as regards the nature of their servitude, their hours of labour, their personal comforts, and their rights, as established by law. 2d. Let the comparison be then fairly drawn between the condition of our slaves and that of the labouring classes of His Majesty's subjects in Britain, and without assuming to ourselves the gift of prophecy, we confidently predict the decision will be in favour of the former. 3d. If, after such investigation, it be decided that emancipation be indispensable, whether from expediency with a view to gratify a faction in the mother country or to serve the purposes of Ministers, let Government and the nation atone to us, and compensate us for the loss of our properties, and we will readily resign them. 4th. Deny us that, and although we may be too weak to prevail, still we may prove powerful enough to injure our oppressors, the spoliators of our property.

3d. That it is an axiom, the truth of which is incontrovertible, that by the constitution of Great Britain the King cannot, at his will and pleasure, seize on or allow to be destroyed the property of his subjects, without first fully indemnifying them for the same, for this principle holds good even when applied to conquered colonies. Not only the King of Great Britain, but any monarch, however despotic he may be (so long as they are obedient to his laws) is bound to regard the rights of his subjects in their property, and to afford them protection when their lives are endangered. In all governments this trust is reposed, and when a king abandons that trust he ceases to be the father of his people, and deprives himself of that just dominion he otherwise is entitled to over them ; but our hopes of relief rest on no ordinary foundation ; they are built on the exalted character of our noble King, on the wisdom of his ministers, on the justice of the British House of Parliament, and on the honour and good feeling of the British nation. They surely cannot suffer us, as Britons (and as such we make the appeal,) to be divested of our rights of property, or deprived of that protection we are justly entitled to, so long as we preserve our virtue as a people, and our fidelity as subjects.

4th. Conscious that our loyalty and devotion to the throne of Great Britain has hitherto been unimpeachable, now that our properties are nearly reduced to ruin, and our lives placed in danger by the anticipation of the horrors of a servile war, which it cannot be doubted will ensue if the measures with which we are threatened from England be persevered in, we claim, as a right the interference of that Government we have so long and so largely contributed to support, both in peace and war, to avert those evils, and, *ad interim*, to afford us such means of defence as may exempt us from personal injury, and preserve to Great Britain this colony, until the excitement now existing in the minds of our labouring population has subsided.

5th. That (however reluctantly) we feel ourselves compelled candidly to declare, that should such protection be denied, acting, as we shall then unavoidably be, under the impulse of the first and most ungovernable principle of nature, self-preservation, we cannot be considered contumacious if, in this our destitute situation, we pursue the most constitutional mode of requiring to be absolved from our allegiance to a government that considers us no longer worthy of its solicitude and regard, for it is inconsistent to expect that the subjects of any government can lose their property, and submit to their lives being endangered, and at the same time be bound by the duties of allegiance when the protection of their sovereign is withheld from them.

6th. The coloured population of this parish now present, participating in the feelings, and concurring as they do in the proceedings of this meeting, take this opportunity of denying their having given any authority, directly or indirectly to Dr. Lushington to make the assertion he did in the British House of Commons, " that they were ready to emancipate their slaves, and aid to compel the white inhabitants to do the same," but, on the contrary, do declare their determination to assert their rights as British subjects, and to support their white fellow-colonists (with whose interests and safety their own are so completely identified) in the possession of every description of colonial property, until full, ample, and definite compensation be given for the same.

7th. Should these our reasonable demands be refused to an injured, though faithful, people—if this be considered as the fittest period in which to inflict an indelible stain on the character of, and to perpetuate an irreparable injury to, the British nation by the loss of these colonies, in which to cast dishonour on the hitherto untarnished and glorious House of Brunswick, by inducing William

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the Fourth to become the oppressor, and not the defender of his people, in God's name let not us, the unoffending inhabitants, be made a sacrifice to propitiate the offences of our merciless persecutors, the deadly foes to the prosperity, honour and renown of the first nation on earth ; but if we must fall, let us, at least, perish with honour as a people not insensible to glory and reputation, for if we fail in our remonstrances, in our exertions, and are overcome, the page of history will do us justice, will cast a halo over our memories, and record that we died martyrs, for we, like our predecessors, who faithfully served the British Government from the settlement of the constitution, will appear to have been at length sacrificed to the mad projects of a band of zealots and fanatics, which a weak and imbecile Government had not the firmness to resist. Even our enemies may live, and have cause to repent of their unnatural and sanguinary conduct, though an early interference may yet prevent these calamities, and avert the catastrophe.

8th. That this parish will most cordially co-operate with the other parishes of this island in any measure that may be deemed necessary to be adopted for their general security ; and that the following gentlemen be appointed a Committee, to correspond and pay attention to any matters of importance touching the public weal that may be brought under their notice, viz. Thomas Powell, David Hollingsworth, Francis Hall, John Davy, Samuel Glanville, George Brooks, Charles Newman, and Adam Hogg, esqrs. ; and that the Clerk of the Vestry be requested to act as Secretary (any expenses of stationery, postages, &c. to be paid by the parish).

9th. That the chairman be requested to sign the foregoing resolutions on behalf of the Meeting, and transmit a copy of them to the island agent, with a request that he will have them inserted once in The Times and John Bull London papers, and in the Glasgow Courier ; also that they be published in the county papers one month, and once for four consecutive weeks in the Jamaica Courant and Kingston Chronicle.

Robert Crawford.

On Mr. Crawford leaving the chair, Thomas Powell, esq. was called thereto ; and on motion of Mr. Berry, the thanks of the meeting were given to Robert Crawford, esq. for his very proper and dignified conduct in the chair.

Thomas Powell.

AT a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Parish of St. Ann, convened by his Honour the Custos, this 6th day of August 1831, and held at the Court-house, St. Ann's Bay ;

His Honour the Custos having been called to the Chair,

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to :—

Resolved, That we, the inhabitants of the Parish of St. Ann, have repeatedly expressed our warmest indignation at and abhorrence of the oppressive measures pursued by the British Government to the West India Colonies.

Resolved, That this expression of our sentiments, as well as those from other parishes, have been utterly disregarded ; and, coupled with the marked neglect which the remonstrances of the House of Assembly have suffered, convince us that nothing is to be gained by further supplication or submission.

Resolved, That while there was a hope of conciliating our implacable foes, we acquiesced cheerfully in the conduct of our legislature, but it is now evident that the concessions yielded by that body have been successively obtained under pledges and promises on the part of Ministers "to abstain from all future interference in our local concerns," which pledges have been violated in every instance, giving us thereby convincing proof that perfidy and determined oppression, as far as regards the Colonies, are the ruling principles of the British Cabinet.

Resolved, That hitherto, under the most marked infractions of our rights and privileges, we have been loyal. Our attachment to the mother country has indeed long, very long outlived her justice, and it would now be with grief that we should divest ourselves of a feeling which has "grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength," but when we see ourselves scorned, betrayed, devoted to ruin and slaughter, delivered over to the enemies of our country, we consider that we are bound by every principle human and divine to resist.

Resolved,

Resolved, That we duly appreciate the good intentions of his Excellency the Governor, in the communication made by him, from the Colonial Office, to his honour the Custos, and this day laid before this meeting; but past experience compels us to view it, as another instance of a pledge from ministers, which will never be redeemed; nor do we consider that they are disposed to stem the torrent of public clamour, which has been raised against the colonies,

Resolved, That this colony has already gone great lengths in ameliorating the condition of our slaves, in the spirit of the resolutions of the British House of Commons of 1823; and that before going further, we have a right to expect His Majesty's Ministers should perform their part, by showing in what manner the rights of private property are to be considered."

Resolved, That this meeting considers it highly necessary and expedient at the present alarming crisis, to act in union with every parish in the island, and begs leave to recommend the immediate formation of committees by the respective parishes, from which one general committee may be appointed, to meet in some convenient place, and draw up a petition to His Majesty, humbly beseeching him to redress our grievances, and interpose his authority to prevent the violence and injustice with which we are threatened; and also to adopt such measures, in conjunction with the other colonies, as the welfare of the whole may appear to require; and we do hereby invite the other parishes to communicate with the parochial committee now to be chosen by this meeting, for the furtherance of our common interests, and the protection of our lives and properties.

Resolved, That the magistrates, vestrymen, and other inhabitants now present, do pledge themselves to provide the funds necessary for carrying the foregoing resolutions into effect; and that the following gentlemen be a committee for the parish of St. Ann, viz. S. W. Rose, W. S. Harker, Charles Smith, G. W. Senior, and U. T. Todd, esquires.

Resolved, That the chairman be requested to sign the foregoing resolutions, and that they be published one month in the county papers of this island, in the John Bull, and in the Glasgow Courier.

Henry Cox, Chairman.

His honour the Custos having left the chair, and the Honourable Abraham Hodgson having been called thereto;

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting are hereby given to his honour the Custos, for his very able, dignified and impartial conduct in the chair.

— No. 6. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich*.

My Lord, King's House, Jamaica, 21st December 1831.

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your Lordship's information, the copy of the message I have received from the House of Assembly, on the subject of the Slave Act now in force.

I have, &c.
(signed) BELMORE.

May it please your Excellency,

THE House have taken into their attentive consideration your Excellency's last message of the 27th October, with the several accompanying documents, viz. Mr. Huskisson's despatches of the 22d September 1827 and 22d March 1828, Lord Goderich's despatch of the 16th June last. The first and most important of these documents having been fully replied to by the House in 1827, they deem it unnecessary to enter again into the same detail; and as the law for the government of slaves, passed in the early part of the present year, has been little more than one month in operation, common prudence requires that some reasonable time should be allowed, to see the effect of what has been already done, before any further changes are hazarded.

— No. 7.—

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderick*.

My Lord,

King's House, Jamaica, January 6, 1832.

I HAVE a painful duty to discharge in detailing to your Lordship the substance of accounts I have received, by which you will learn that an extensive and destructive insurrection amongst the slaves in the western district of this island has followed a season of unusual sickness and distress, and that I have felt myself compelled to resort to the most active measures, even that of proclaiming martial law, to arrest the progress of so great a danger.

It was not until Thursday, the 22d ultimo, that I received any accounts to excite alarm. The apprehensions which appeared to disturb the public mind during the summer had nearly subsided. The planters complained of poverty and distress; the delegates sent forth an ambiguous declaration, deprecating (as they expressed themselves) "the insidious attempts to undermine and render valueless what little remains of their property;" but the brink of danger on which they stood formed no part of their deliberations.

On the 22d of December I received a despatch from Colonel Lawson, a magistrate, and commanding the St. James's regiment of militia, dated the 20th, stating, that on the Friday preceding he met the overseer of Salt Spring estate, who informed him that on the previous day the negroes had behaved with great insolence to Mr. Grignon, the attorney or chief manager of the estate; that two constables, who had been sent to convey the ringleaders to Montego-Bay, had been assaulted and deprived of pistols with which they were armed, as well as their mules, and that the negroes had expressed their determination not to work after New Year's-day. Mr. Grignon having repaired to Montego Bay, a special session of magistrates was assembled, when he and other persons employed on the estate gave information of the circumstances which had occurred, and of the riotous and disorderly state of the slaves; in consequence of which an order was issued by the magistrates to Major Coates, as the nearest field-officer of militia, to send a detachment of the St. James's regiment to Salt Spring estate, for the purpose of restoring order. Major Coates immediately communicated the directions he had received to Colonel Lawson, commanding the St. James's regiment, and who, anxious to avoid the necessity of having recourse to the militia, and being for many years well known to the negroes of the estate, delayed the detachment from marching, and accompanied by Mr. Tharp, a neighbouring proprietor, proceeded to the estate, in the hope, by his influence, to prevail on the negroes to return to their duty. He found the negroes assembled in groups about the buildings of the estate, and was informed that the senior book-keeper had suffered ill-treatment, and that his life had been threatened. He endeavoured to expostulate with the negroes, telling them he came as their friend, and asked them to listen to him; they would not, however, suffer him to approach them, and walked off; and finding all his endeavours to restore order ineffectual, he left them. Soon after, a party of 50 men of the militia arrived, when almost every negro on the estate disappeared. The next day they began to return, and when Colonel Lawson wrote his despatch, the principal offenders, only, amounting to six persons, were absent. This conduct of the negroes on Salt Spring estate, and information which the magistrates had received that the negroes on other estates would not return to work after New Year's-day, induced the magistrates assembled at Montego Bay to forward a requisition to Major Pennefather, commanding the 22d regiment, at Falmouth, to order a detachment to march to that town, which Major Pennefather immediately complied with. On the following day I received an application from certain magistrates and inhabitants of the parish of Portland, desiring that a vessel of war might be ordered to Port Antonio, on account of some unpleasant rumours which had reached them of discontent amongst the slaves in that quarter.

Being in Kingston when these accounts arrived, I immediately communicated the information I had received to Sir Willoughby Cotton. I applied to Commodore Farquhar for a ship of war to proceed to the port of Port Antonio; and as a precautionary measure, I also recommended that ships of war should be dispatched to Montego Bay and Black River, which Commodore Farquhar, with his usual promptitude and attention, immediately complied with. I directed circulars to be addressed

to custodes of parishes, enclosing the King's proclamation, and also letters to be written to the major-generals of the militia, copies of which (Nos. 1 & 2) I enclose.

On the morning of the 28th I received a despatch from the custos of Trelawny (No. 3), enclosing one forwarded to him by Colonel Lawson (No. 4), containing certain affidavits, copies of which (Nos. 5 & 6) I herewith enclose; and further stating that he considered the information they contained so convincing of impending danger, that he had determined to assemble the whole strength of his regiment, and referring to me for further instructions. From Mr. M'Donald, the custos of Trelawny, I also learned that he deeply regretted to find a strong spirit of insubordination amongst the slaves. That on the 23d instant, the trash-houses on York estate, in Trelawny, had been purposely burnt down, and that the attorney, who lives on the property, was strongly impressed with the idea that they intended to burn the rest of the works. One company of militia was ordered to proceed to this estate, but before they arrived the negroes had cut down the plantain walk belonging to the overseer, and both men and women had fled.

It happened that I had convened a council on the day I received this despatch, for the purpose of enabling me to form regulations of quarantine, should such a measure become necessary; by which means an opportunity was afforded me of conferring personally with Sir Willoughby Cotton, who came from Kingston for the purpose of attending the council; and being fully satisfied from the information I had received, that nothing but prompt and decided measures would arrest the spirit of insubordination which prevailed so generally in the parishes of St. James and Trelawny, I strongly recommended Sir Willoughby Cotton to proceed to Montego Bay with as little delay as possible, taking with him such an amount of force as he might deem expedient, anticipating that his immediate presence would produce the most favourable effect. Sir Willoughby Cotton readily acquiesced in my proposal, and the following day he embarked on board His Majesty's ship Sparrowhawk, with two companies of the 84th regiment.

On Thursday the 29th I received various despatches by post, the substance of which I enclose (No. 7), which I lost no time in communicating to Sir Willoughby Cotton, and immediately issued the accompanying M. G. O. (No. 8). On the same day, at 5 p. m., despatches arrived by express, containing still more alarming accounts of the state of the country. The work of destruction had begun, and fires had been seen, both in St. James's and Trelawny, to blaze the preceding night in various directions. The custos of Trelawny stated, that in his opinion nine-tenths of the slave population had refused to turn out to work, and Colonel Lawson, instead of being able to oppose these excesses, had drawn in his regiment to Montego Bay, and even there appeared to feel apprehension, acting only on the defensive. Not waiting to detail this information in a letter to Sir Willoughby Cotton, who on account of the regular winds which prevail in this latitude, could not leave Port Royal until the following morning, I immediately despatched Captain Ramsey, 77th regiment, my military secretary, on board the Sparrowhawk, with the letters I had received, not doubting that on their perusal Sir Willoughby Cotton would deem it advisable to order a stronger force to follow him. By this means also I communicated to Sir Willoughby Cotton my intention to convene a council of war, according to the 50th Geo. 3, c. 17, cl. 74, on the following day, for the purpose of submitting to them such information as I possessed on the state of the country, in order to obtain their opinion on the necessity of declaring martial law. The next morning (the 30th) Sir Willoughby Cotton, with the detachment embarked on board the Sparrowhawk, sailed from Port Royal for Montego Bay; and on the following morning His Majesty's ship Blanche, Commodore Farquhar, proceeded on the same destination, conveying 300 men from the 33d and 84th regiments, and 16 artillery soldiers, with two 8 field pieces, rockets, &c.

I did not come to the resolution of assembling a council of war for the purpose before stated, until I had thoroughly satisfied my mind that the immediate exigency admitted no middle measures; that more than anything else, it would remove an impression which had been made on the minds of the slaves that the executive government and the King's troops would not oppose them; that speedy example, however greatly I must regret and deplore the necessity of resorting to it, could alone stay the destruction that had begun, and ultimately save a greater effusion of blood; and likewise, that under martial law alone I could obtain complete control over the militia force, on whose services I must chiefly depend to put down this rebellion.

By the 72d clause of the Act above referred to, your Lordship will find the form directed for holding councils of war, and that no council shall consist of less than 21 members; on this occasion 36 persons were present. I communicated to them such information as I possessed, and laid before them the letters I had before transmitted by Captain Ramsey to Sir Willoughby Cotton, copies of which (Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14) are enclosed; and in conformity with the unanimous opinion of this numerous council, on the 30th instant martial law was forthwith proclaimed. No time was then lost in issuing general orders, directing the St. Ann's Western regiment to assemble at Rio Bueno, the Clarendon regiment on the confines of Trelawny, the Westmorland and Hanover regiments on the confines of St. James, whereby I endeavoured to cut off all communication between the disturbed districts and other parts of the island, with a force ready to act under Sir Willoughby Cotton on his arrival at Montego Bay. At the same time I addressed a private communication to Sir Willoughby Cotton, a copy of which (No. 15) is herewith annexed.

Accounts arrived on the 31st December from Maurice Jones, esq. Custos of the parish of Portland, the north-east extremity of the island, stating that the negroes on three estates had refused to work, and had betaken themselves to the woods. It is somewhat remarkable that this same gentleman, a few days previous, on learning that a man-of-war, as I have before informed your Lordship, had sailed for Port Antonio, appeared to consider the application of the magistrates had proceeded from ill-founded apprehension of the hostile disposition of the negroes in that quarter, although he was not ignorant that some excitement remained in the minds of the negroes about their being made free, expressed his regret that such a precaution had been adopted, stating that he never considered the negroes in that neighbourhood to be more peaceable and contented.

In the course of the night a despatch arrived from General Robertson, by which it appeared, that the depredations committed by the negroes in the parish of St. James had extended along the great river towards the parish of St. Elizabeth, and that the estate of Ipswich had been threatened. The officer commanding the Westmorland regiment had posted two regiments at an estate called Haddo, and orders were given for the St. Elizabeth's regiment to hold themselves in immediate readiness. Further accounts from General Robertson informed me that "the rebels were proceeding in the direction of Ipswich and New Savanna, and that he had moved a large body of men to oppose them." The following day he communicated to me the destruction of Ipswich estate, with several others, and thus concludes: "I am of opinion that all the force in my district is unequal to suppress the incendiarism and destruction, without the co-operation of regular troops." At this time General Robertson was not aware that Sir Willoughby Cotton had proceeded with a force of troops of the line to Montego Bay. Fifty men of the 77th regiment, under the command of Major Wilson, with a supply of arms and ammunition, were embarked on board His Majesty's ship Rose, and proceeded, on the 3d instant, to Black River. On the 3d January I received another despatch from General Robertson, enclosing the deposition of an overseer, who had been eight days a prisoner of the rebels. A copy of this document, and of General Robertson's despatches (Nos. 16, 17 & 18), are also enclosed. The loss which the rebel negroes sustained at Ginger-hill, I have every reason to hope may check the depredations committed in that district. But I thought it proper to issue the accompanying proclamation (No. 19).

On the 3d instant I received a despatch from Sir Willoughby Cotton, informing me of his arrival at Montego Bay, as well as the troops embarked on board His Majesty's ship Blanche. I shall not curtail the impression the Major-general has transmitted to me, by making extracts from his despatch; I therefore enclose it. (Nos. 20, 21, 22 & 23).

On the morning of the 4th I received unfavourable accounts from Portland, especially from Mr. Panton, a magistrate and proprietor in that parish, whose letter (No. 24) I enclose. Mr. Panton appears to have laboured under feelings of much alarm. I had, however, anticipated the necessity of checking any insubordination which might appear in that quarter, having assembled the Portland, St. George and St. Thomas-in-the-East regiments of militia before his letter arrived. Forty men also of the 77th had been conveyed in the boats of the Champion from Port Antonio to Manchioneal, under the command of Captain Buchan; and Colonel M'Leod, also, in the absence of Sir Willoughby Cotton commanding at Kingston, had ordered Captain Tathwell, with 30 men of the

33d regiment, embarked on board of His Majesty's ship Hyacinth, to proceed to Morant Bay, and from thence to march through a populous and as yet tranquil district, where however the St. Thomas-in-the-East regiment were assembled, to Manchioneal.

The appearance of this force will, I trust, be sufficient to check any disposition to revolt in that quarter. It is obvious, however, from all the information that has been received, that the negroes have been impressed with a general and firm belief that after Christmas they were to be free. They will have much to answer for who have deluded these unfortunate people into expectations which have led to such scenes of devastation and ruin, and which now, recoiling on themselves, numbers must expiate by their death. My chief attention, therefore, is directed to maintain good order where quiet still remains, to protect the well-disposed, and to be always prepared to assemble a strong disposable force ready to act on the first appearance of insubordination.

To give greater efficiency in the direction of all military affairs in this part of the island, I have given Colonel M'Leod, deputy adjutant-general on the staff in this island, the rank of lieutenant-general of militia, whereby I obtained the assistance of an able and experienced officer, and extended his command over the militia as well as over the troops of the line.

I also received despatches from Montego Bay, dated 3d instant (No. 25). I have the honour to enclose a copy of one from Sir Willoughby Cotton, whereby it appears that the burnings still continued to be executed in concert, by signal from the heights. That the leaders who had suffered the day preceding had all declared that they had been told by white people that they were to be free at Christmas, and that by these people the plan of insurrection had been arranged. That in concurrence with the custos of the parish, Mr. Barrett, prisoners to the amount of 100, not actually implicated as incendiaries, with the women, had been dismissed into the country with copies of the proclamation before alluded to, numbered 21.

A despatch was also received from the custos of St. James, of which I enclose an extract (No. 26). He speaks highly of the conduct of the militia; but, I lament to say, adds to the list of destruction contained in list numbered 23, intimating the number of plantations and settlements destroyed to the amount of 100.

From Morant Bay I received a letter from Colonel Delpratt, enclosing a despatch from Lieutenant-colonel M'Cornock, of the St. Thomas-in-the-East regiment, containing nothing of sufficient importance here to notice, but by which I collected this important fact, that although the negroes on some estates had refused to work, no act of destruction had been committed in that quarter, with the exception of a trash-house, which had been burned, but not ascertained to have been destroyed by design: at any other time the information would have been sufficient to have created great uneasiness in my mind, but now contrasting it with what is passing in the west end of the island, I regarded it as rather satisfactory.

On the 5th I received further accounts from Sir Willoughby Cotton, dated the 4th (No. 27), and I am happy to say their contents began to wear a more satisfactory appearance. The active measures he had adopted, together with the proclamation he caused to be issued, he observes "had produced an extraordinary effect;" the negroes were coming in fast, and a communication opened to Maroon Town: the loss the negroes had sustained created a strong panic; and a movement which the Major-general proposed to make the following day, he imagined would stop any further depredations in that neighbourhood. By the same express a letter arrived from the custos of Trelawny, a copy of which (No. 28) is enclosed. I should hardly think it necessary to transmit a copy of this letter from the custos to your Lordship, did it not refer to a person of the name of Box, who, I am informed, is a missionary from the Baptist Society, and who has since been reported in custody in this town. I have caused his removal to Falmouth to be delayed, and have directed a letter to be written to the custos, a copy of which (No. 29) I enclose. I am as yet unacquainted with the charge on which orders were issued for his apprehension at Falmouth; but the information received from the custos renders it at all events necessary that he should be for the present detained; motives, however, of prudence and humanity caused me to interpose a delay in hurrying him to trial at a moment when so great excitement must necessarily prevail.

This morning, the 6th instant, I have had the satisfaction to receive a despatch from Sir Willoughby Cotton, dated Montego Bay, January 5, 10 A. M., with still more favourable accounts, a copy of which (No. 30) I enclose. Tranquillity, he states, is fast returning in the adjoining neighbourhood, and the negroes coming in

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from all directions, desiring to avail themselves of the promise of pardon offered in the proclamation. The roads to Lucea and Maroon town were open, and many proprietors and attorneys proceeding to visit their estates. Provisions, he states, are scarce; but being informed of that yesterday, I caused letters to be written to the mayor of Kingston, and the custos of St. Mary, from whence I have no doubt a supply, if not already, will be quickly sent.

Sir Willoughby Cotton expresses his astonishment I had not been made acquainted with the determination of the negroes not to work after New Year's day. Referring your Lordship to my despatch of the 4th of August, I have now the honour to enclose copies of two letters (Nos. 31 & 32), dated the 29th and 30th of July, addressed to custodes of parishes, from none of whom I received unsatisfactory accounts; nor has any complaint reached me of insubordination amongst the slaves, or any disposition to insurrection, although the members of Assembly from all parts of the island had only separated, on adjournment, from the seat of government on the eve of the insurrection.

I send your Lordship the copy of a letter (No. 33) I have this day received from Commodore Farquhar; and it is only due to that officer to declare that, in all my communication with him, he has always afforded me the most active assistance and support in promoting the good of the public service. When it is considered how short a time Sir Willoughby Cotton has been in the disturbed district, it is astonishing what effect his presence and example have produced in the minds of the insurgent slaves, whilst the promptitude and decision of his operations, and the exemplary punishment he felt himself compelled to inflict on the most atrocious offenders, have convinced the great mass of the slave population that all further resistance is unavailing; and the colony must ever acknowledge the importance and value of his services.

Were I to indulge my own personal feelings, I might express myself in a manner strongly indicating the consolation and relief I have derived from his energy, and at the same time discretion; but in bestowing my humble meed of praise on an officer of such distinction, I fear that I should render myself liable to a charge of presumption in attempting to add any thing to a reputation standing on such high ground as that of Sir Willoughby Cotton.

I have, &c.

Right Hon. Viscount Goderich,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) BELMORE.

No. 1.—(Circular.)

Sir,

King's House, December 22, 1831.

His Excellency the Governor having received intelligence that a disposition to insubordination had manifested itself amongst certain slaves on a plantation in St. James, his Excellency no longer hesitates to give every possible publicity to His Majesty's proclamation, which the uninterrupted tranquillity that has hitherto prevailed throughout the island had not seemed to render necessary.

I am directed, therefore, to transmit to you printed copies of this proclamation; and his Excellency requests that you will cause it to be read to the slaves by the persons in charge of the several plantations in your parish.

I have the honour to be, &c.

To the
Custodes of the several Parishes.

(signed) W. Bullock.

BY THE KING, A PROCLAMATION.

WILLIAM IV.

WHEREAS it has been represented to Us that the slaves in some of Our West India colonies, and of our possessions on the continent of South America, have been erroneously led to believe that orders have been sent out by Us for their emancipation; and whereas such belief has produced acts of insubordination which have excited our highest displeasure: We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal proclamation; and we do hereby declare

declare and make known, that the slave population in Our said colonies and possessions will forfeit all claim on Our protection if they shall fail to render entire submission to the laws, as well as dutiful obedience to their masters: and We hereby charge and command all Our Governors of Our said West India colonies and possessions to give the fullest publicity to this Our proclamation, and to enforce by all the legal means in their power the punishment of those who may disturb the tranquillity and peace of Our said colonies and possessions.

Given at the Court at St. James's, this 3d day of June 1831, and in the first year of Our reign.

GOD save the KING.

No. 2.—(Circular.)

Sir,

King's House, December 22, 1831.

HIS Excellency the Captain-General having received information that a disposition to insubordination had manifested itself amongst certain slaves on a plantation in St. James's; although his Excellency trusts that this is a merely temporary and local excitement, still prudence requires that every measure of precaution should be adopted by the military authorities to meet any possible extension of a spirit of disobedience, by a prompt employment of the militia forces when and where their services may be required. With this view regimental officers should not be absent during the holidays from their usual places of residence, and you will be pleased to issue orders to the officers commanding regiments in your district to this effect.

Should, contrary to his Excellency's hopes and expectations, the employment of any of the regiments or detachments of corps under your command become necessary, his Excellency requests that you will act in conjunction with the civil power.

I have, &c.

To the several Major-Generals.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

No. 3.—(Copy.)

Sir,

Falmouth, Trelawny, Dec. 26, 1831.

I HAVE had the honour this morning to receive your despatch of the 24th instant, enclosing His Majesty's proclamation: I am sorry it was not published sooner. I forward a despatch, which I found here this morning, from Colonel Lawson. I most deeply regret to find a strong spirit of insubordination generally among the slaves. On the morning of the 23d instant, both the trash-houses on York estate, in this parish, were purposely burnt, and the lives of the white people threatened; and as the attorney who lives on the estate was strongly impressed with the idea that they intended to burn the rest of the works, I was induced to order a company of the militia to that property. I was at Fontabelle when I issued the order, and I am sorry to say that three of the magistrates down here thought proper to countermand my orders; in consequence of which I made a requisition to Major Pennefather, of the 22d regiment, who immediately sent a small detachment to the estate: they are now relieved by a company of the militia; and by a letter just received from the company, I find the negroes have this morning cut down the whole of the plantain-walk belonging to the overseer's establishment. The whole of the negroes, both men and women, have absented themselves since Saturday the 24th instant.

At a meeting of the magistrates, which took place about an hour ago, it was determined to order the whole regiment and troops under arms, and a requisition has been sent to Major Pennefather, at Maroon town, requesting him to move a strong detachment of the 22d regiment to the vicinity of York. If the information contained in Colonel Lawson's despatch proves correct, strong and energetic measures must immediately be taken. There are strong rumours that Green-park and Orange-valley negroes are determined to work no more; they are of themselves upwards of a thousand strong.

I have this instant read a despatch from Sir W. Cotton to Major Pennefather; it is certainly an extraordinary document: he says, the troops are not to act until the Riot Act is read, and unless His Majesty's troops are insulted. The negroes

WEST INDIA COLONIES ;

are already strongly impressed with the idea that the King's troops have instructions not to act against them, and certainly if this despatch were published it would confirm their opinion. I hope, most sincerely hope, this order will be immediately countermanded; if not, His Majesty's troops, who are so well paid by the country, will be of little service to us.

As I have ordered packet guards, you will be regularly informed of any occurrence worth noticing; I hope things will put on a more favourable aspect soon than they have at present.

I have, &c.

William Bullock, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James Macdonald,*
Custos of Trelawny.

No. 4.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to enclose an affidavit made by two respectable individuals, and a copy of an application made to Major Pennefather at Maroon town, by which his Excellency can observe the situation of this parish is extremely critical.

I have also received a letter from Mr. George Gordon, of Moor-park estate, in this neighbourhood, and of Windsor-lodge, of which he is attorney, fully corroborating the affidavit; in fact, so much information has been received here by the magistracy, that no doubt can possibly be entertained of the determination of the negroes to refuse to work after the holidays, and on any attempt to compel them being made, the white people were to be destroyed, and country set fire to.

The information is of so convincing a nature, that I have thought it my duty to lose no time in ordering out the whole strength of this regiment to remain on duty at their respective beats till further orders.

His Excellency I hope will permit me to request such instructions as he may be pleased to honour me with.

I have, &c.

(signed) *G. M. Lawson, sen.*
Colonel St. James's Reg.

William Bullock, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

December 25, Six o'clock, p. m.

No. 5.—(Copy.)

Jamaica, P. St. James's.

PERSONALLY came and appeared before me, Robert Stuart and Alexander M'Kenzie, esqrs., who being duly sworn, made oath and said, that from information received by these deponents, they have every reason to believe that a general insurrection of the slaves on Adelphi, Content, Glasgow, Windsor-lodge, Somerton, Paisley and Palmyra estates, on Tuesday evening the 27th instant, will take place, with the intention of burning the properties and murdering the free inhabitants thereon.

(signed) *Robert Stuart.*
A. M'Kenzie.

Sworn before me, this 25th day of December 1830.

(signed) *Geo. Gordon.*

Sir,

St. James's, December 25, 1831.

IT has just come to our knowledge, from the testimony upon oath of several respectable witnesses, that a most extensive conspiracy has been formed by the negroes of Adelphi, Content, Glasgow, Windsor, Palmyra and other estates, to rise on Tuesday evening the 27th instant; the place fixed on for the negroes to meet is Adelphi-works, where the buildings are to be burnt, and the white people murdered. The conspiracy is so general that any militia force that could be assembled would be probably ineffective, and by attempting to collect one at a given point, every surrounding estate would be left deserted by its white residents. We therefore call upon you, as the only means to save this part of the island from fire and bloodshed, to send without a moment's loss of time (for if it transpires that the

SLAVE INSURRECTION.

whites have got intelligence of this intended revolt it will commence instantly) a company of the 22d regiment, or such force as can be spared, to Adelphi-works, there to remain till circumstances shall warrant their departure.

We have, &c.

(signed) *Geo Gordon,
Alex. Campbell,*

Magistrates of the Parish of St. James's.

To Major Pennefather, or Officer commanding
22d Regiment, Maroon Town.

No. 6.

Sir, Court House, Montego Bay, Dec. 19, 1831.

WE the undersigned magistrates, this day assembled in special sessions, have to inform you, that from the disorderly behaviour of the negroes on Salt Spring estate, in the neighbourhood of this town, a guard of the militia has been stationed on that property since Friday last. We consider it highly necessary, for the preservation of the public peace during the approaching holidays, that a company of the 22d regiment should be stationed at the barracks in this town; we therefore require you, with as little delay as possible, to order the above-mentioned force to be sent here, to remain for such period as we may deem proper for the preservation of the public safety.

We have, &c.

(signed)	<i>Lawrence Hislop.</i>	<i>Thomas Josh. Grey.</i>
	<i>James Guthrie.</i>	<i>Jas. Gordon.</i>
	<i>Jno. Sharp.</i>	<i>G. M. Lawson, sen.</i>
	<i>H. A. Plummer.</i>	<i>Geo. Gordon.</i>
	<i>George Cragg.</i>	<i>Wm. M. Kerr.</i>
	<i>W. Reynolds.</i>	<i>George Longmore.</i>

To Major Pennefather, or Officer commanding
22d Regiment, Falmouth.

No. 7.

Heads of Information received at the King's House, relative to the Disturbances on the North Side of the Island.

COLONEL GRIGNON, December 26, states, That insubordination had appeared on Salt Spring estate, in St. James; that he had ordered out the western interior regiment; that the negroes were determined to strike work at Christmas, but no slaughter to be committed, unless any of the rebels were killed in taking the arms from the white people.

Colonel Lawson, November 27, states, That an application had been made by the magistrates of St. James to Major Pennefather, requesting a detachment of the King's troops at Montego-bay; states the disposition he had made of his regiment, by which a line of post was established; and expressing his doubts how far the militia law would be sufficient to act with effect, and suggesting the necessity of establishing martial law.

Colonel Campbell, Lucia, December 27, states, That he had ordered a guard to be kept at Fort Charlotte to protect the ammunition; and that in consequence of a communication from Colonel Lawson, he called out the remainder of the regiment.

Colonel Tyler, Falmouth, December 27, states, The alarming situation of the district about York estate, where the rebels had burnt the trash-house; and as sufficient time was not afforded for sending the whole regiment, he was obliged to withdraw the detachment he had stationed at York.

The magistrates of St. James, December 27, transmitted Three affidavits of no great importance, all however concurring in the determination of the negroes not to work.

Colonel Grignon, Great River Barracks, December 27, states, That he received information that 500 men had assembled near Lapland, who had bound themselves

themselves by a solemn oath to obtain their freedom or die in the attempt; and asking for a detachment of regular troops.

Colonel Lawson, December 27, 10 o'clock P. M., states, That since sun-set six fires have been seen from the court house, at Montego Bay, in the neighbourhood of Kensington, and extending northerly to Content; he feared the whole of the east part of the parish would be destroyed before morning.

Collector, Montego Bay, December 27, states, That several fires were seen, and giving information much to the same purpose as Colonel Lawson.

No. 8.

Head Quarters, Spanish Town, December 29, 1831.
M. G. O.

His Excellency the Captain-General has received information from the magistrates of St. James and Trelawny, that the slaves on certain properties in those parishes have manifested a spirit of insubordination, and in some instances have proceeded to acts of outrage, which have excited his Excellency's highest displeasure, and have exposed them to the utmost rigour of the law. His Excellency, however, trusts that His Majesty's gracious proclamation will remove any erroneous impressions which may have been received, and that they will render themselves objects for the merciful consideration of the Crown, by an instant return to their former habits of obedience and duty.

His Excellency, however, is determined to employ a military force against those who may be guilty of acts of violence or outrage, which all their endeavours will be utterly unable to resist. For this purpose his Excellency has requested the Major-general commanding to proceed to Montego Bay with a strong reinforcement of troops; and his Excellency delegates to Sir Willoughby Cotton all the military authority he could exercise were he personally present. His Excellency directs all major-generals of militia commanding districts, and in places not subject to the command of major-generals, all officers commanding regiments of horse and foot, to consider themselves under the command of Major-general Sir Willoughby Cotton, and to obey all his orders with zeal and alacrity.

Captains of forts where dépôts of fixed ammunition are established, will attend to any requisition the Major-general may make.

(signed)

Edward J. Grey,

Adjutant-General.

No. 9.

Sir,
Falmouth, Trelawney, Dec. 28, 1831.

It is with the deepest regret that I have to state to you, for the information of his Excellency the Governor, that many of the estates in this parish are at this moment in an actual state of rebellion, and I believe nine tenths of the whole slave population have this morning refused to turn out to work; the whole country was in a blaze last night. Three trash-houses were burnt in this parish, viz. Pantrepant (in rebellion), Golden Grove and Carrick Poyle. Many must have been burnt in St. James's, from what I saw myself, but only the names of four of them have as yet come to my knowledge, viz. Palmyra, Leyden, Windsor, Gilsburgh. Our militia is very weak, and we have little to expect from the regulars, unless positive orders are sent to them to act. I would recommend to his Lordship to proclaim martial law without a moment's delay, and in the meantime to send down written orders to act with the utmost energy. Orange Valley, 700 strong, has refused to turn out. If I, or the colonel of the regiment, had authority to act, the plan I would propose is, to assemble the whole of the militia, and at once attack the largest estate, and then proceed to the others as circumstances might direct; and, as I stated in my last dispatch, it would be most politic to order a company of the regulars with them, as it would do away with the notion the slaves entertain that the King's troops are not to act against them. If it possibly could be done the Admiral might be applied to to send a man-of-war to each of the ports of Montego Bay and Falmouth. His Lordship may depend I do not in the least exaggerate the situation of things; they cannot well be worse, but fortunately no blood has been yet shed that I have heard of: every man is clamorous

clamorous to get protection for their own concerns, but it is advisable to make no detachments. I fully expect to see a number of fires to-night, and our situation is truly dangerous. The most prompt measures must be taken for our relief, but of course his Lordship is the best judge of these, though I have taken the liberty to suggest some plans: whatever is done must be done quickly. The militia are all under arms, and the magistrates at their posts.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Jas. Macdonald, Custos.*

No. 10.

Sir,

SINCE I had the honour of addressing you by post last evening, so many fires have taken place that I have deemed it proper to withdraw the out-posts, as I do not wish to expose them to a contest which I do not consider them equal to, and to concentrate them here, with the exception of one company, which I have directed to move in support of Colonel Grignon, whose situation, with that of his regiment, I fear is extremely critical. I have also directed the Hanover company, stationed at Round-hill, to move on for the same purpose.

I am now convinced the contest must be decided in the streets of Montego Bay.

I have, &c.

William Bullock, Esq. (signed) *G. M. Lawson, Col. S. J. R.*
&c. &c. &c.

No. 11.

Post Office, Montego Bay, Dec. 27, 1831,

Nine o'clock, p. m.

Sir,

I CONSIDER it my duty to inform you, that there is at this moment a serious fire raging in a south-easterly direction from this town, apparently about eight or ten miles distant, and it is supposed to be at Hampton estate, but from the glare I fear it extends to other estates in its vicinity lying more to the northward.

From the late insubordination of the negroes on many estates in this neighbourhood, which has caused the militia to be under arms since Sunday last, it is to be feared that this fire is not from accidental causes, and I beg the favour of your giving his Excellency the Governor immediate information thereof.

I have, &c.

W. Bullock, Esq. &c. (signed) *John Roby,*
Collector of His Majesty's Customs.

P. S. Half-past nine.—I have just been informed that Kensington Pen and Mr. Tulloch's settlement have been burnt. We have one company of the 22d regiment in this town.

No. 12.

Sir,

Ten o'clock, p. m.

THE late arrival of the Leeward post allows me to have the honour to state, that since sun-set six fires, apparently of estates, have been seen from the court-house, in the neighbourhood of Kensington, extending northerly to Content, and they seem gradually to be extending to the northward.

I have, &c.

(signed) *E. M. Lawson, Col. S. J. R.*

P. S. I fear the whole of the east part of the parish will be destroyed before day-light.

Five p. m. A trooper has just arrived from Palmyra, with a despatch from Captain Cleghorn, of the 8th company, stating that the negroes on that estate set fire

WEST INDIA COLONIES :

to the trash-house, when his men were searching the negro houses for arms, agreeably to my orders. The incendiary ran into the cane-piece, which induced Captain Cleghorn to threaten to set fire to the cane-piece, which he had ; the negro then came out and surrendered himself, with a woman who had been with him ; these, and the head driver, who was taken up on suspicion of being an accomplice, and now in custody, having been delivered to a patrol of the troop.

Hampton estate is threatened to be destroyed to-night.

Wm. Bullock, Esq.

I have, &c.
(signed) E. M. Lawson, Col. S. J. R.

No. 13.

Jamaica, Ss.

BY THE KING, A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Council of War, to declare martial law in Our said Island of Jamaica, for the security and protection of Our said Island against the evil designs of the enemies of our Crown; in order, therefore, to render effectual the measures taken for the security of Our said Island, We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our said Council aforesaid, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, strictly charging and commanding, and We do hereby strictly charge and command, all and every the commissioned and warrant officers and private men of Our militia of Our said Island, to repair forthwith to their several and respective regiments and stations, and there to hold themselves in readiness to receive and obey all such orders as shall from time to time be given to them by Our Captain-General of Our forces in Our said Island, or in his absence, by any superior officer, upon pain of the highest displeasure, and of such pains and penalties as, by the rules and articles of war, established in Our said Island, are inflicted upon such persons as shall be guilty of disobedience of orders.

Witness his Excellency the Right honourable Somerset Lowry Earl of Belmore, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of this Our Island of Jamaica, and other the territories thereon depending, in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral of the same, at Saint Jago de Vega, this 30th day of December, in the second year of Our reign, anno que Domini 1831.

(signed) BELMORE.

By his Excellency's command,
(signed) W. G. Stewart, Sec.

GOD save the KING.

No. 14.

Head Quarters, December 30, 1831.
M. G. O.

MARTIAL law was this day proclaimed ; but as the Captain-General is unwilling to employ a greater militia force than is necessary to repress the disturbances in St. James and Trelawny, his Excellency does not think it, at present, necessary to call for the services of the Kingston, St. Catherine, Port Royal, St. Andrew's, Manchester, Vere, St. John, and St. Dorothy, St. Thomas in the Vale, St. Thomas in the East and St. David, Portland, St. George and St. Mary's regiments, but the officers commanding those corps will be prepared to assemble them at the shortest notice.

Packet guards will likewise be established between Portland and St. George's, to facilitate the communication with head quarters.

Colonel Hilton will assemble his regiment with the least possible delay, and march the greater part of them to Rio Bueno, where they will hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Trelawny, should their services be required there. Colonel Hilton will leave a part of his regiment, composed of the most inefficient men, at Bromstown.

Colonel

Colonel Dunn will immediately assemble the Clarendon regiment and march the greater part of them to some station or stations on the confines of Trelawny, taking care that a constant communication be kept up between the two parts of his regiment, should it be found necessary to separate them, and make such arrangements as may enable them to act together at the shortest notice.

Colonel Dunn will leave a part of his regiment, composed of the most inefficient men, at Chapelton.

Major-general Robertson will order the Westmorland and Hanover regiments to be immediately assembled, and the Westmorland regiment will march to the confines of St. James's, where they will hold themselves in readiness to act wherever their services are required. Major-general Robertson will order the Hanover regiment on duty, but they will remain in their own parish until their services are required by Major-general Sir W. Cotton.

The St. Elizabeth regiment is not to be placed on duty, but they ought to be in such a state of readiness as to act upon the shortest notice.

The officers commanding the Clarendon and Westmorland regiments will give the earliest information to Major-general Sir W. Cotton, as soon as their regiments have occupied their respective stations.

The Captain-General has been pleased to confer on Lieutenant-colonel Cadier the colonelcy of the Trelawney regiment, vice Colonel Tyler, who is superseded in the command of that regiment.

(signed) *Edwd. T. Grey, Adj.-Gen.*

No. 15.

King's House, December 30, 1831.

My dear Sir Willoughby,

In conformity with the intention I communicated to you yesterday, I summoned a council of war as prescribed by law; and agreeable to the unanimous opinion of those who composed the council, martial law has been proclaimed.

It will be my object to refrain as much as possible from calling out any portion of the militia whose services may not appear to be absolutely necessary; and I enclose herewith an order I have issued, by which you will be informed of the regiments you may now consider at your disposal. These regiments will be found to surround the district now in insurrection, by which means I hope to interrupt any communication with the slaves in other parts of the island.

I have also to observe, that should you deem it expedient to increase the regular force you have ordered for embarkation, I am now enabled to garrison the town or barracks they at present occupy by detachments from the militia.

As it will be highly satisfactory to His Majesty's Government to receive the latest and most authentic information of the actual state of the north side of the island, I shall wait with impatience for your report, and detain the packet until I receive it. You will by this means also have an opportunity, should you think proper, to convey an account to the Horse Guards of the result of your proceedings.

I am, &c.

Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *BELMORE.*

No. 16.

My Lord,

Y. S. Estate, 1st Jan. 1832.

I DID myself the honour of addressing your Excellency yesterday evening from the post at New Savanna; since which I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the militia general orders, of date the 30th ultimo, which were handed to me on my way to this post, and from which I observe that your Excellency has further honoured me by placing the Hanover regiment under my command. I beg to assure your Lordship the orders shall be strictly attended to.

It is now my duty to inform your Excellency that two companies of St. Elizabeth's regiment, viz. the grenadiers, under the command of Captain Stone, and the 5th battalion

WEST INDIA COLONIES :

battalion company, under the command of Captain Hinlayson, were ordered up last evening to Ipswich estate and Ginger-hill plantation, both in this parish, (the works of which properties had been burnt down,) where they found the rebels in great force, and attacked them. As far as can yet be ascertained, 20 of them were killed, and many prisoners made ; they retreated leaving many stand of arms, and a great quantity of ammunition was found in their houses. Fortunately the attack took place at the moment it did, as they were preparing to come down here to attack this post ; and so confident were they of success, that they had provided a great quantity of meat, liquor, &c. for a feast on their return to Ipswich. The bravery of these two companies will, I hope, in some measure restore confidence to the community, and be the means of preventing other negroes from joining the disaffected party, which I apprehend the unfortunate retreat of Colonel Grignon had caused many to do. I am happy to say the overseer of Ginger-hill was released, after having been for eight days a prisoner of the rebels. His evidence, which has been taken, will disclose to your Lordship some of the causes which appear to have led to these unhappy disturbances among the slaves, who had gone so far as to accuse the Government of supporting them against the whites ; which idea alone must have produced a wonderful effect upon the minds of the slave population generally, and must be removed before they can be restored to a state of subjection and tranquillity. I therefore anticipate much good from the appearance of His Majesty's troops being brought against them, which I trust will be the means of saving many lives, and preserving much valuable property.

It is my intention to move detachments from the different regiments under my command into the disturbed districts, and to follow up the advantages we have already gained, which I hope will meet the approval of your Excellency.

To His Excellency
Somerset Lowry, Earl of Belmore,
Captain-General, &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) D. Robertson,
Major-General.

No. 17.

Y. S. St. Elizabeth, January 2, 1832,
half-past Two o'clock, P. M.

Sir,

I DID myself the honour of addressing you yesterday ; since which I have received your despatches, of date the 31st December and 1st January, which shall have my particular attention. Enclosed I beg leave to forward you the deposition referred to in my despatch to his Excellency the Governor yesterday. Since the defeat of the rebels in this quarter on Saturday evening, a company was advanced to occupy the district which they had quitted.

I am sorry to say discontent is spreading generally in this parish, as the slaves on many properties, as well as those under my own control, have refused to return to their labour this day.

From the examination of the prisoners we have taken, I have discovered the names of some of the rebel commanders, viz. Colonel Gardiner, belonging to the Greenwich estate, Captain Dove, belonging to Belvidere, Captain Johnson, belonging to Retrieve, and General Ruler Sharp, alias Daddy Ruler Sharp, director of the whole, and preacher to the rebels. I have deemed it advisable to offer a reward of three hundred dollars to any free person or maroon, and freedom, with an annuity for life, to any slave who will bring in, dead or alive, either of these ringleaders of the rebels. A confirmation of the above from head quarters will have a very great effect as soon as it obtains publicity by proclamation, forwarded immediately to the disturbed districts. The prisoners are increasing so rapidly, that in order to secure them it will be necessary to have them lodged on board of one of His Majesty's ships. I am most anxiously looking for a detachment of regular troops in this quarter.

I am happy to say the maroons who came to head quarters last night have gone home for their arms, and I expect them to join us during the day.

I am sorry to observe the remark you make respecting the delay in forwarding the despatches. I can assure you it does not take place within my district.

W. Bullock, Esq.

(signed)

D. Robertson, Major-General.

I have, &c.

©

No. 18.

DEPOSITION on Oath of *Wm. Annand*, Overseer of Ginger-Hill Plantation, in the Parish of St. Elizabeth.

Y. S. Estate, 1st Jan. 1832.

HAVING received information from Mr. James Campbell, overseer on Y. S. Estate, with whom I had lived as book-keeper, that the slaves from Ginger-hill to Belvidere Estate, in St. James's, intended to disarm the white people during the Christmas holidays, and advising me to come down to Y. S. Estate, as he intended keeping all his white people together there; I was much surprised at such information, having seen nothing in the conduct of the slaves belonging to Ginger-hill to induce me to suspect anything of this kind. I did not go down, being satisfied by the behaviour of the people that the information was incorrect. I was, however, undeceived; for on Wednesday morning, the 28th of December, when they were ordered to turn out to work, seeing several of the slaves about the house, I asked what they wanted; a slave belonging to Ginger-hill, named William Buchanan, said they had come to beg Busha for to-day, as Sunday was Christmas-day. I said I had already given orders to the driver to that effect; all that I wanted was to see them turn out, and see they were all there, and they should have the remainder of the day. With this they seemed dissatisfied, and no thanks were returned. I went into the house, and was followed immediately by the said slave, William Buchanan, who laid hold of me, saying, "Busha, you now my prisoner," and called for his accomplices, namely, William Arnold, Charles Longmore, George Barrett, Alexander, Thomas Hedley, and Johnny, all slaves belonging to Ginger-hill. On inquiring what was the matter, they said they had worked long enough as slaves, and intended now to fight for their freedom, which had been long promised them; that all they wanted of me was to deliver up my arms, and whatever powder I had, then I might remain undisturbed on the property as long as I chose, provided I did not interfere against them. I endeavoured to reason with them on the impropriety of such conduct, but to no effect; they said that I knew as well as themselves that Jamaica was now free, and half the estates from there to Montego-bay were burnt down the night before; that they were obliged to assist their brethren in this work of the Lord; that this was not the work of man alone, but they had assistance from God. I saw that a refusal of their demand was useless, and delivered up my arms and what powder I had in the house. They then departed, advising me not to remove from the house, as if I attempted it, I should certainly be shot by some of their guards who were posted on all sides of the property. I remained in the house, and observed them through the day bringing in arms from the settlers around.

On Thursday, the 29th, I saw a great many strange negroes, who, as I understood belonged to Chesterfield, Retrieve, Richmond-hill and Belvidere; some of them with fire-arms, and others with lances, cutlasses, &c. They had scouts posted on all the hills around, from the Y. S. Estate, extending towards St. James's, to give them notice of the approach of the militia. On seeing a company of the St. Elizabeth's regiment marching up to Ipswich Estate, they suspected, from the notice they had received from their scouts, that the said company was moving towards Ginger-hill, and collected all together in a narrow defile, called John's River, to await their approach. As soon as they found the company had gone to Ipswich, they returned to Ginger-hill. About one o'clock, p. m., it was hinted to me that they intended burning the buildings on the place that night. I sent for the head driver, who came, and about three o'clock, p. m., on seeing a strong party of them moving towards the house, he (the driver) advised me to follow him, save my own life, and mind nothing else; I did so, and he conducted me to the house of a freeman named Crawford. I was informed, that on coming to the house, they inquired for me, and expressed themselves happy that I had gone away, as they intended setting fire to the place immediately. They then went to the negro-houses, and in half an hour returned, taking away every moveable thing out of the house and stores, which they accomplished by dusk, and afterwards set fire to all the buildings. About seven or eight o'clock a party of them came to the house of Crawford, where I was, forced his arms from him, and brandishing their cutlasses over my head, and pointing their muskets at me, made me swear that I would never stand between them and their rights. The active person in this scene, and who

seemed to have the command of them, was a slave named Samuel Sharp, belonging, I was told, to T. G. Grey, Esq., of Croydon, in St. James's, and who, I understand, is a ruler (so called) of the sect of the Baptists. He said he did not wish to take away the life of any person who did not stand between him and his rights ; that it was but lately that he had begun to know much of religion ; but that now he knew, and I knew as well, that freedom was their right, and freedom they would have ; that letters had long ago been sent out from England to that effect, but that the people of Jamaica kept them as slaves, without any authority for doing so. He said a great deal more, all tending to show, that, from the religious notions he had imbibed, he conceived that the slaves had a right to be free.

By day-light on the morning of Friday the 30th ultimo, the buildings of Ginger-hill were in ashes : I remained at the house of Crawford, having been warned by the rebels that, if I attempted to make my escape I should be killed by the guards. A large part of them, I understood, went this day to Ipswich, but seeing a company of militia there, returned, leaving a few hands to burn the buildings of that estate, should an opportunity offer during the night.

On the morning of Saturday the 31st, three of the party, named William Buchanan, S. Barrett, belonging to Ginger-hill, and G. Little, belonging to Mistress Milne, gone off the country, came to me, two of them with fire-arms, and the other with a sword ; I asked William Buchanan what he wanted ; he said, here is the captain, pointing to G. Little. I then asked the latter what he wanted ; he said, pointing his sword to my breast, that they would give me my choice, whether I would give up my life or my authority on Ginger-hill, which latter they demanded in writing ; that they intended presenting it at Black River with others. I gave them an acknowledgment under my hand that I had given up the charge of the place ; they then warned me to take care what I had written, as they had a man below who would read it to them, and if they found anything wrong in it they would pay me another kind of visit. The said George Little said that they had lost one of their profession, and now intended showing less mercy than they had done ; he said also, in a boasting manner, that he with two others had burnt down the buildings of Ipswich the night previous, driving the whole guard before them ; that they intended entering Saint Elizabeth's on New-year's-day with 200 men. William Buchanan said (in addition to what has already been deposed) that the Whites considered the ships of war on their side, but that now they found it was otherwise, for that they were dispersing the white guards wherever they were collected all round the island, and landing boxes of black sand (meaning, I suppose, gunpowder,) for the slaves. About three or four o'clock on the afternoon of this day a slave, named George Crawford, belonging to Ginger-hill, who had been forced against his will to join the rebels, came running to me, saying that the white guard had come to Ginger-hill, taken the negroes by surprize, dispersed them all, and set fire to the negro houses. In fifteen minutes afterwards the grenadier company of the St. Elizabeth's regiment appeared, and rescued me from my perilous situation.

During the time of these disturbances I was told by a slave, named Susannah Crawfurd, belonging to Ginger-hill, that she heard from Anne Laye, a free person of colour, living near Ginger-hill, and a member of the Baptist persuasion, that a Mr. Burchell, a Baptist missionary, who had gone off the country last year, had arrived at the foot of Montego-bay, on Wednesday or Thursday se'nnight, that he had shown himself to none, but remained concealed on board a Spanish vessel or some vessel of war. That he did not intend landing until this affair was settled, but had written to his deputies that his dearly beloved children must not regret his absence, for that he would be to them a pillar of iron, and would always be their support. That they must shed no blood, for life was sweet, easy to be taken away, but very hard to give.

So help me God.

(signed) *William Annand.*

Sworn before me this 2d day of January 1832.

(signed) *D. Robertson, Custos.*

No. 19.

A PROCLAMATION, by His Excellency *Somerset Lowry Earl of Belmore*, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of this Our Island of Jamaica, and other the Territories thereon depending, in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c. &c.

WHEREAS it has been ascertained that certain incendiaries have been employed to poison the minds of the slaves in some parts of the island, and to induce them to be guilty of acts of outrage and insubordination; and whereas it is necessary that the ringleaders of this disturbance should be brought to condign punishment, I do hereby, in His Majesty's name, offer a reward of 300 dollars to any person or persons who shall apprehend either of the following slaves:—

A slave calling himself Colonel Gardiner, belonging to Greenwich estate, Hanover; a slave, calling himself Captain Dove, belonging to Belvidere Estate, St. James's; a slave, calling himself Captain Johnson, belonging to Retrieve, St. James's; and General Ruler, Samuel Sharp, or Tharp, alias Daddie Ruler Sharp, or Tharp, director of the whoe, and styled also Preacher to the Rebels, belonging to Craydon Estate, St. James's.

And in order to afford encouragement to such slaves who may be disposed to assist in apprehending the aforesaid rebels, I do hereby promise His Majesty's most gracious pardon to any slave or slaves who may be disposed to assist in such purpose, except those who have been actually guilty of setting fire to the works or houses on different properties, or attempted the life of any peaceable inhabitant.

Given under my hand and seal at arms, at St. Jago de la Vega, this third day of January, Annoque Domini, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, and in the second year of Our reign.

BELMORE.

By his Excellency's Command,

W. Bullock, Sec.

GOD save the KING.

No. 20.

My Lord,

Montego Bay, January 2, 1832.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint your Excellency I arrived here yesterday, and found the town in the greatest confusion and panic, from the apprehensions they have been under of its being the intention of the negroes to fire it every night, and from the immense destruction of property that has taken place all around this place.

Colonel Grignon (whose Report, No. 23, I enclose) has been in collision with the negroes, and his regiment gallantly repulsed them, when attacked by a large body at Montpelier; but the following morning he retired upon Montego Bay, not being in sufficient force to occupy the post. This has obstructed the communication with Savanna-la-Mar by the direct road, but I shall take immediate steps to have it re-established, and have directed Lieutenant-colonel Williams to move up on his side to Haddo and Crown Tavern. I shall send a force of King's troops to accompany some companies of Colonel Grignon's regiment to Montpelier barracks; this will effect, I hope, the above object of opening the road to Savanna-la-Mar.

I have relieved apprehension, and quieted the feeling of alarm here; but the eastern part of Hanover, and the whole of the northern portion of St. James's, are in open revolt, and almost the whole of the estates destroyed, and the negroes gone boldly away. In conjunction with the advice of the custos, Mr. Barrett, I have issued the proclamation I herewith enclose, which we hope will bring in the well-disposed, as we hear from all quarters that terror prevents a large body from returning; and I have been solicited by the most influential proprietors to issue it.

I have sent regulars to Irwin and Latium, as they are well disposed there, and this will protect these points and others in the neighbourhood, which are not as yet fired.

It becomes my painful duty to acquaint your Excellency that circumstances rendered it absolutely necessary that I should authorize the assembling a general court

WEST INDIA COLONIES :

martial to try some villainous ringleaders, who have been proved to have been the most active incendiaries, and the court have sentenced two men to be shot, and two women ; the sentence upon the men, as immediate example is both politic and necessary, I have confirmed, and they suffered this morning ; the women I have respited till pleasure.

My object will be to employ the troops in such manner as to prevent, as far as practicable, the horrid incendiary system from spreading, and the spirit of rebellion from contaminating the districts now tranquil. It will be obvious to your Excellency the utter impossibility of affording parties of military to every estate. It would fritter away the troops, and render them liable to be beat in detail, nor would 10,000 men be sufficient to do it. Whenever I can ascertain where they are collected, I shall endeavour to strike a blow by simultaneous movement that will have decided effect, but there the difficulty rests ; for, from the accounts I have received, that are to be depended upon, they are moving every hour from one place to another. I think from accounts that have reached me since commencing this despatch, I may venture to hope that in my next despatch I may acquaint your Excellency that the severe example made, and the manifesto issued will have had the best effect.

To receive the assurance that your Excellency approves of the measures I have been under the absolute necessity of adopting, will be highly satisfactory to

My Lord, Your Lordship's obedient servant,
(signed) *Willoughby Cotton,*
Major-General Commanding.

No. 21.

Head Quarters, Montego Bay, St. James, Jan. 2, 1832.

To the Rebellious Slaves.

Negroes,

You have taken up arms against your masters, and have burnt and plundered their houses and buildings. Some wicked persons have told you that the King has made you free, and that your masters withhold your freedom from you. In the name of the King I come amongst you to tell you that you are misled. I bring with me numerous forces to punish the guilty, and all who are found with the rebels will be put to death without mercy. You cannot resist the King's troops ; surrender yourselves and beg that your crime may be pardoned. All who yield themselves up at any military post *immediately*, provided they are not principals and chiefs in the burnings that have been committed, will receive His Majesty's gracious pardon, all who hold out will meet with certain deaths.

(signed) *Willoughby Cotton,*
Major-General Commanding.

GOD save the KING.

No. 22.

KENSINGTON, Five Miles from Maroon Town burnt, and all the places around, with the under-mentioned estates :

Newman-hall, Flamstead, Potosi, Spring-Mount, Hampton, Williamsfield, Worcester, Retirement, Carthagena, Leyden, Guilsbro', Windsor, Adelphi, Passly, Moor-park, Leogaree, Kirkpatrick-hall, Palmyra, Windsor-castle, Roehampton, Anchovy Bottom, Montpelier, N. W., Montpelier, O. W., Seven Rivers, Richmond-hill, Lapland, Belfont, Hazlelymph, Belvidere, Greenwich, York, Chester-castle, Argyll, Sodhall, Copse, Lethe, Eden, Childermas, Wiltshire, Spring Garden, Unity-hall, Welsome, Haddington, Friendship, Content, New-miln, Bamboo, Flint-river, Success, in the parishes of St. James and Hanover.

No. 23.

Sir,

Upton, Montego Bay, 2d Jan. 1832.

I TAKE the earliest opportunity, after your arrival here, to detail to you the proceedings of the Western Interior regiment under my command.

Having received information, on the 24th ultimo, of an intended insurrection of the slaves in the West Interior district, I felt it my duty to assemble the regiment immediately, and I am glad to find that his Excellency the Captain-General approved of my having done so.

On the 25th I sent out parties in search of arms and ammunition, and brought in a few arms and a considerable quantity of powder; but it being generally of the coarse description, required for blasting, and unfit for muskets, I thought it most prudent to destroy some of it.

Having received intelligence on the 26th, that a considerable number of slaves had assembled in different quarters, I thought it proper to remove a few men I had at Shettlewood, where my head-quarters were established, to Belvidere, in order to concentrate the regiment as much as possible.

On the 27th I received information that it was the intention of the rebels to attack the posts which I held, with large bodies, and I therefore thought it proper to order the Belvidere division to form a junction with the main body at Great River. Previous to my quitting Belvidere, I had also heard that the negroes intended to commence a system of incendiarism on this night, and observing fires to a great extent, which I had heard previously were to take place, induced me, coupled with the former information, to unite the regiment as I have before stated. During this night fires took place at Belvidere, Hazlerymple, and Seven Rivers.

On the 28th, a detachment of my regiment marched to Belvidere and surrounded the negro houses; but I found none of the negroes, and their property was removed. Not having heard further from the commanding officer of the Westmorland regiment, and as the barracks at Great River were quite insufficient for the accommodation of the regiment, I decided upon removing to Montpelier old works, to form a junction with the detachment of the Saint James's regiment, promised by Colonel Lawson.

On the 29th I received information that a large body of negroes were assembled at Chester Castle, and I proceeded with a detachment of the regiment to that place, having first given directions to the officer commanding the Westmorland detachment to meet me there with one company. The negroes had however fled, and I saw nothing of the Westmorland detachment. On my return to quarters, I observed the negroes at Montpelier new works, assembled in a large body, setting fire to the trash-houses. I immediately ordered the detachment, who were all mounted, to dash into the mill-yard, and the rebels were dispersed. In this attack (I understood from information afterwards received) there were two of them killed and one wounded. Upon this occasion I have to notice that Ensign Reanie, with a small advanced detachment, was extremely active, and throughout the whole duty which the regiment had to perform, I was ably supported by this officer. Upon my arrival at quarters, I found the company of the Saint James's regiment had arrived, under the command of Captain Ewart, at about five o'clock. At about seven o'clock the rebels advanced upon us in four columns. The first body moved upon the trash-houses, to one of which they set fire, and became engaged with Captain Ewart's company, and the piquet-guard of the Western Interior under Ensign Gibbes. The officers and men behaved in the most gallant manner, and shortly dispersed the enemy. This division, from the statement of Captain Ewart, consisted of about 40 men. The three other divisions attacked the main body of the W. I. regiment, who had been formed into solid square, and kept up a considerable firing of musketry upon them. The regiment reserved their fire until the rebels had advanced within 30 or 40 yards, when they commenced a very rapid fire, which continued for about 20 minutes, when the enemy dispersed in all directions. One body of the enemy, who attacked by the main road, could not have consisted of less than 200 men; the numbers in the other divisions I cannot judge of, as they were covered by a stone-wall fence and the Hill-house; but both divisions appeared to have many fire-arms. Where all behaved with so much gallantry, it would be invidious to name any individual; at the same time I cannot omit mentioning that Mr. Rhodes Evans, a gentleman resident in the W. I. district, and who had volunteered his services, distinguished himself, and I am under great

obligations for his able assistance. I must also state, that I was much indebted to Captain Balme for his judicious suggestions to me during and after the engagement. I regret to add, that in this encounter we had one man killed and four wounded; and Major King's and Serjeant Sewell's hats were shot through, but they received no injury. I could not learn the exact number of the rebels killed and wounded, but I understood afterwards that they admitted they had lost 10 men killed and 25 wounded. The company of the Saint James's regiment, together with the W. I. lay under arms the remainder of the night.

On the 30th, I ordered one of the companies of the Westmorland regiment to move up to Montpelier; but as I could place no dependence on their doing so, from the correspondence which I had with the officer commanding the detachment, and as the company of the Saint James's regiment most positively refused to remain at the post, and being in want of both ammunition and provisions, I called a meeting of the officers, and they were unanimously of opinion that I could not maintain the post, and I therefore retreated with the whole body to Montego Bay. The information received by the company from Saint James's was, that an overwhelming body of negroes was collecting in every quarter around us, and I also received similar information. On my arrival at Montego Bay, I was ordered by Colonel Lawson to detach a company to Catharine Hall estate, and the remainder of the regiment remained for the night at Upton, and without anything to eat.

On the 31st, I was ordered by Colonel Lawson to move the whole of my force to support a detachment of the St. James's regiment at Fairfield estate, and I did so (with the exception of a few men left to guard the baggage), but found no detachment there, and I therefore placed the regiment at Catherine Hall estate, where it now remains, excepting one company sent to Fairfield by your orders.

You will observe, by the correspondence between the officers of the Westmorland regiment and myself, what sort of support I could expect from them. I have also to add, that the men have been most wretchedly supplied with provisions, and little or no assistance has been rendered to them. In fact, in one case, when a cart had been engaged to carry up supplies to Montpelier, it was appropriated to carrying those for a division of the St. James's regiment at Latium.

Our arms are generally very inefficient; and seventy stand, which had been purchased for the use of the W. I. regiment, have been otherwise appropriated. I have also to notice, that I have not had time to cast a sufficient number of balls and to make cartridges (the usual musket-ball and cartridge not suiting the rifle-pieces); and several of the men have only the suit of clothes on their backs, and which they have now worn for four or five days, their servants having been intercepted by the negroes in attempting to carry their clothes to the guard, and a few of the officers are nearly in the same situation.

The cartridge-paper which I lately received from the stores is so very bad that it cannot be used; and I must therefore request an order from you on Colonel Lawson to supply me with half a ream.

I have, &c.

(signed) *W. S. Grignon,*
Col. West Int. Reg.

No. 24.

My Lord,

Manchioneal, January 3, 1832.

As a magistrate of this district, I feel it my duty to make known to your Lordship the state of insubordination, amounting, I may almost say, to rebellion, under which the slave population at present labour.

I yesterday morning heard that my own people, as well as those of four adjacent estates, had refused to go to their work. I used every persuasion, but with no effect. Every hour since informs us of similar delinquency on the part of other estates; and from the manner in which the insubordination first shows itself, there can be no doubt but that it is organized upon a system. To protect this district, fourteen miles in length, and containing a population of 3,000 slaves, we have only one company of militia for our protection, whose utmost force I may estimate at forty. We have sent to Port Antonio for military assistance, but I fear the similar insubordination existing there will prevent the possibility of any assistance coming from that quarter. I will venture to suggest that a man-of-war of a small class, with a detachment of troops on board, if speedily sent round, may possibly restore tranquillity. The harbour is bad, but still is frequented by merchantmen; at any rate, the man-of-war may be in communication with the vessel stationed at

Port

Port Antonio. I have just heard that a number of disaffected negro men were met last evening in the immediate neighbourhood of those estates who first struck work, armed with cutlasses and bills.

I have, &c.

(signed) Edward Panton.

No. 25.—(Copy.)

My Lord,

Montego Bay, January 3, 1832, Mid-day.

THE burnings are executed from signals on the heights by moveable parties of negroes, not belonging to the properties they set on fire; but the negroes on those properties must be in the conspiracy, and co-operators when these men arrive, otherwise they have the means of preventing their effecting their purpose. The whole of the men shot yesterday stated they had been told by white people for a long time past, they were to be free at Christmas, and that their freedom order had actually come out from England, but was withheld; that they had only to strike work *en masse* and they should gain their object; that the whole of the estates in Trelawny and St. James had agreed so to do; that if they were attempted to be forced to turn out to work, they were then to fire the properties, but not the canes, or the provision grounds, or their own huts; that this would make the proprietors come to their terms. The above is corroborated by the testimony of several others now under trial and in prison. The men brought by the Blanche landed yesterday evening, and I was enabled to send out four parties with officers immediately to Fairfield, Belmont, St. Catherine's Mont, and across the river to Maroon town.

The incendiaries set on fire Belvidere, as Captain Smith's 22d was moving up. He immediately moved upon them, routed them in every direction, and killed about fifteen men; but the fire could not be extinguished. These posts continue occupied, nor is there a man to be seen of the negroes, as I am just returned from thence; but the woods are so thick in the neighbourhood, and the paths by which they retire impassable for any quick movement of British to overtake them. Accounts from Colonel Hilton, at Rio Bueno, state as yet they are quiet, but he is under apprehension for the estates of Lancaster, Harmony Hall, Manchester, Biddeford, Bengal and Dornock.

He has his regiment at Rio Bueno, 180 men. I have desired him to protect, as far as he can, these estates, which he will be enabled to do if others do not break out. Accounts from Falmouth are satisfactory, and Lucia district as yet is quiet. The communication with Maroon town is now closed, as the rascals from these environs have assembled there. To-morrow morning I shall open this communication. Straggling parties of insurgents had got upon the Lucia road, and fired upon the despatch troopers. I have opened this morning that road, but the fellows were seen, and fled immediately into the woods on seeing our troops; therefore, as they may return when the patrols are away, and as it is impossible, except by dislodging them bodily, to ensure safety on the roads, I shall make, as soon as I possibly can, a forward movement altogether, leaving with the navy merely sufficient men to protect Montego-bay.

Combustibles were found in a house here belonging to the wife of one of the men shot yesterday, and no doubt exists she intended to fire it. She, with the incendiaries caught in the fact, are now trying. The other prisoners, who amount to more than 100, I have put at the disposal of the custos, whose opinion is, in which I coincide, that those not actively implicated as incendiaries, with the women, had better be dismissed into the interior, with some copies of the paper issued here, a copy of which I sent your Excellency yesterday. The Commodore, who is most zealously active in wishing to co-operate in every way with me, has permitted nearly 150 sailors and marines to land every evening, and be placed as picquets on the roads leading from the town; and the fort is under their charge. This is to me of the greatest assistance. Further than this, he has by row-boats protected the bay and shores. The Blossom is at Savannah-la-Mar, and has afforded assistance by marines and others to the town. If from any further accounts your Lordship may receive, that that part of the country is still threatened, I would beg you would order Colonel Mac Leod to send 100 men from Kingston and its neighbourhood, if you are all quiet there. But recollect the importance of Fort Augusta, and the environs of Kingston and Spanish Town, and I am sure you will agree with me that it is absolutely requisite to have a large force disposable there, should symptoms show themselves there.

I have, &c.

(signed) Willoughby G. Cotton,

Major-General Commanding.

The Earl of Belmore.

285.

E

WEST INDIA COLONIES:

P. S.—The general court-martial have condemned two other negroes and the woman to be hung. The evidence is so direct, I have thought it my duty to confirm the sentences. I received every assistance from the custos.

I cannot communicate with Accompong, except by General Robertson, with safety. I have written to Colonel Hilton to call upon the maroons to send a force to Belfont, and to cut off the insurgents from passing the Great River, and to offer 300 dollars for their bringing in any of the chiefs of the insurrection; they are known to General Robertson. If the maroons will cover the Great River from Chesterfield to Dacket Spring, we prevent them effectually from entering Westmoreland. General Robertson occupies Nassau, St. Elizabeth. I find the greatest difficulty in acquiring the means of moving provisions, which alone prevents my moving this day.

(signed) W. G. C.

No. 26.—(Copy.)

Sir,

Montego Bay, January 3, 1832.

I HAVE received your despatch, announcing the declaration of martial law: as soon as it came to hand, being Sunday afternoon, the 1st instant, I caused proclamation to be made accordingly, and the rules and articles of war to be read to the militia under arms.

The Major-General will inform his Excellency respecting the military operations.

The militia, to a man, are zealous and loyal; no praise can be too high for their courage and conduct.

Yesterday Bellefield estate was destroyed, being within three miles of the town; an officer and twelve men were stationed there, but were driven off by numbers. A detachment of the 22d on the next estate (Fairfield) marched upon the rebels, but too late to save the buildings; however, they killed twelve of them, and must have wounded many. The Ramble (the great house of Bellefield, and on the hill above it,) was burned at the same time.

It is supposed that 100 plantations and settlements are already in ashes. If the rebellion spreads, our force is quite insufficient to put it down; all depends on the moral effects of the employment of the King's troops.

Sir Willoughby has put forth a proclamation, offering pardon to all but principals and chiefs; I have some hopes that, backed by an imposing force, and the many losses the rebels have already suffered, this measure will cause amongst them differences and suspicions of each other, if it answers no other purpose. As yet the insurgents have exhibited the most wretched cowardice. Captain George Gordon has done them much mischief from his post at Latium; he has destroyed the negro-houses of many properties, where the negroes had first destroyed the works. Five rebels have been tried by court-martial, and shot; a woman, also condemned, was spared; I think she should be hanged. I learn from Major Campbell that assisted by a party of the 22d, he has held out at Schawearth. He states many negroes are fleeing into the woods, where they must soon starve.

I have, &c.

W. Bullock, Esq.

(signed) Rd. Barrett, Custos.

No. 27.

Head Quarters, Montego Bay,
4 January, 5 P. M.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Excellency's despatches, with enclosures, of the 3d (yesterday,) and feel gratified that the measures I have taken have met your Lordship's approbation. I am no advocate for severe measures, if they can possibly be avoided; but where example is necessary, the sooner it is made the more effect it will have; and these infamous wretches have not only set the properties on fire, but their cruelty in various instances has been excessive, besides being at this moment in rebellion.

I am now happy, my Lord, to give you satisfactory accounts from hence. The measures adopted, together with the proclamation issued, has had the most extraordinary effect; I have this afternoon received accounts from Pitfour and Latium, stating the negroes were coming in fast, and the road to Maroon Town is open. The attacks made yesterday, and the number of men they have lost in the various affairs, which I find is more considerable than I imagined, has spread a panic amongst them that has cleared them from this neighbourhood; and I think the movement

movement to-morrow will stop any further depredations hereabouts. I have closed Colonel Hilton upon Falmouth, and begged General Cox to send three companies to Rio Bueno; Colonel Hilton will occupy, till further orders, Duncans, Cambridge and Mountain Spring; my great object will be to get them between my columns.

I have begged the Commodore (who has acceded directly) to let a sloop of war move immediately to the mouth of Great River, and land a party of marines and sailors to occupy the post of Round-hill, from which Colonel Campbell will move at four to-morrow morning. The road is perfectly open; but it is requisite to ensure its continuance, and also come against any scoundrels that may lurk about some properties that still remain. It appears beyond doubt that the burnings are conducted by regular parties; they are dressed many in blue jackets and black cross belts; some thus accoutred (four or five) were distinctly seen yesterday by Captain Burnett, who advanced, by his report this morning, higher up the hills than I at first understood. He addressed several parties who were standing within hail in groupes, and they hollooed, War, war; he states that not more than 20 were armed that he saw, who fled with 300 or 400 others, who were on the side of the hills, upon the sailors and marines firing. I am thus minute in detail that your Lordship may be exactly aware of their state.

I am happy your Excellency has conferred the rank of lieutenant-general of militia upon Colonel Macleod; you could not have placed it in better hands. May I request your Excellency would give the major-generalship of this district, now vacant, to Colonel Campbell, commanding the Hanover regiment; he is an active serviceable man, and a very good officer, and I am confident you could not bestow it on one so deserving, in a military sense. I told him I would recommend him, but he fears expense, though now he is willing to accept it.

I have communicated with Generals Robertson and Crawford. I will write to-morrow after receiving the reports. Should they find the negroes in force at Seven Rivers, or in position in any of that district, I shall conduct, personally, a reinforcement to the point most essential, and attack them immediately.

I hope I shall be enabled to give your Excellency some satisfactory accounts to-morrow. With endeavouring to establish an organized system of conducting affairs, and with being on my horse to reconnoitre the real state of the country, I have had scarce an instant at command to address my reports to your Lordship; therefore I crave pardon for the hasty manner they may be drawn up in.

I have, &c.

The Earl of Belmore.

(signed) *Willoughby Cotton, M. G.*

No. 28.

Sir,

Falmouth, January 4, 1832.

You may imagine the state I was in last night, from not being able to sign a letter I sent you by post; in fact I was so ill that the people about me got much alarmed. I am free from fever, and better this morning; and, agreeably to Sir W. Cotton's orders, I address you on the present occasion. From a representation made to him by Colonel Cadien, he has instructed me to apply to you immediately for a supply of arms. Colonel Cadien states the quantity required to be 100 stand of muskets complete, and 30 ball cartridges, which I hope will be sent round as soon as possible. It is the intention of Colonel Cadien to arm the artillery company with muskets, except as many as may be necessary to work the few field-pieces which we have got. Though Sir W. Cotton has been made acquainted with my resignation, yet he has given orders to Colonel Cadien to act entirely by my advice, which will be most freely given as long as I am able. Had Colonel Tyler acted, in the first instance, with the promptitude that I wished him to have done, I do not think things would have got to such a head in this parish, but the three magistrates formerly alluded to, persuaded him that I had not sufficient grounds to order a company of militia to York estate; but I knew the people we had to deal with better than they did, and I am convinced that a vigorous act at first would have intimidated them before they had committed themselves so far as to endanger their lives. I am now, however, happy to inform you, that the acts of vigour which have been pursued have induced most of the negroes of this parish to return to their work. Orange Valley, and one or two estates in that neighbourhood, are still holding out; but from its being reported to me this morning that the noise of artillery has been heard in that direction, I am in great hopes that

Major Neilson, with his strong detachment, has fallen in with them ; and my advice to Colonel Cadien was, to take as few prisoners as possible. These people (Orange Valley) had quitted their houses with their valuables, and retired to the woods ; this they would not have had any opportunity of doing had my advice been promptly complied with ; advice, in fact, was the only mode in which I could act until martial law was proclaimed. We have here now about 150 prisoners ; Sir W. Cotton has sent up orders to form a court-martial, which is just now sitting, and I hope they will be able to bring acts of rebellion home to them, to enable us to make such an example as will intimidate the others. Sir W. Cotton has ordered such as cannot be convicted to be dismissed, after having His Majesty's proclamation read to them ; but this they were all acquainted with before, as immediately on my receipt of it I had 200 copies thrown off, and distributed all over the country. There does not appear to have been any combination formed by the negroes in this parish, which I consider fortunate. I find the court-martial has adjourned until nine o'clock to-morrow.

There is no circumstance of my life that I regret more than not being able to mount my horse the moment the first intelligence of the business at York reached me, as I think I would have acted with such vigour as would have nipped the business in the bud ; but as no act of violence took place at York after the burning of the trash-houses, I hope his Excellency will be pleased to pass over what I consider the improper conduct of the magistrates. The facts are these : the moment I took the deposition on oath of the book-keeper, I issued a warrant against five of the negroes whom he considered as the ringleaders, with orders to send up the constables with company of militia, to have it executed ; the great error of these magistrates was the preventing the militia accompanying the constables, who I was certain could not execute the warrant without any assistance, and which I told them the moment I came down to Falmouth, and that they had taken great responsibility upon themselves in disobeying my orders : my fears proved correct, and the delinquents escaped. I am sorry the letter they wrote is at Fontabelle, but I consider it my duty to mention their names, viz. Mr. Lamont, Mr. Dyer, and Mr. George Miller, as I wish minutely to acquaint his Excellency with every circumstance that comes to my knowledge. I must beg leave to state that I highly disapprove of the conduct of Mr. Moulton Barrett ; it has been stated to me that he was seen riding out of town with a Mr. Box, who I had ordered to be taken into custody as one of the incendiary preachers ; under some pretence he was permitted to quit the court-house, and by that means made his escape, supposed to Kingston, where I hope he will be taken into custody.

I am happy to inform you, since writing the above, that Major Neilson has reported to me that many of the Orange Valley negroes have turned out to work, their dépôt of valuables having been discovered and burnt. I regret to say that the Kent negroes still continue refractory, having taken everything from their houses, even their children ; but strong measures are to be immediately pursued against them. I am happy to inform you that every estate under my charge has continued faithfully at their work, and completely protected their master's property, which is very gratifying to me. I do not wish to make any invidious remarks ; but if other gentlemen had acted with the same kindness and taken the same pains to explain the real nature of things as I have done, I do not think that this unfortunate insurrection would have been so general, as in St. James's in particular, their vengeance seems to be pointed against certain individuals.

I am happy still to bear testimony to the cool, vigorous and determined conduct of Colonel Cadien : begging to refer you to the despatches of Sir W. Cotton, Colonel Lawson and Colonel Cadien, it is unnecessary for me to add any thing further.

I have, &c.

William Bullock, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) James Macdonald.

No. 29.

Sir,

King's House, January 6, 1832.

In consequence of the information contained in your letter of 4th instant, I have to inform you that Mr. Box has been arrested ; and although your letter does not state the charge preferred against him, his Excellency considers it quite sufficient to cause him to be detained until he may hear further from you ; you will therefore lose no time in transmitting to me such information as you may have obtained, when, if the charges preferred appear sufficient, he will be conveyed to Falmouth to abide his trial.

The lamentable crisis which has now arrived renders example necessary, however abhorrent it must be to resort to it ; and if it shall appear that Englishmen, men of sense and education, have been wicked enough to excite the slaves to rebellion, it cannot be supposed that they shall escape because they are also ministers of religion. But his Excellency directs me to impress strongly on your mind, the great discretion which in such a case should be adopted, to endeavour, by every means in your power, to divest tribunals from all feeling of prejudice, and above all, of prejudice on grounds of religion ; for in civil commotion, the evil is never so great as when it assumes an appearance of religious war.

Honourable Jas. M'Donald.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Wm. Bullock.*

No. 30.

My Lord,

Head Quarters, Montego Bay, Jan. 5, Ten A. M.

I HASTEN to acquaint your Excellency that tranquillity is returning fast to all this neighbourhood ; the negroes, availing themselves of the proclamation I issued, are coming in from all directions. The three columns I mentioned to your Excellency that I should put in motion to open the Savannah-road, moved before daylight this morning, and will reach their points without any opposition. The roads to Lucia, Maroon town, and all round this town, are clear, and many proprietors and attorneyes are now proceeding to visit their estates. All the ladies and other women who had embarked on board vessels in the harbour, before I reached this place, are now disembarking and resuming their domestic avocations. I hope in a few days I shall be able to have negroes bringing provisions and supplying this place again, but it will require time before confidence can be restored ; the fact is, the negroes in this district have behaved infamously, nor is there the slightest palliation for their conduct. I have most minutely inquired into the treatment generally and particularly, and can aver it has been most kind. That the overseers, or attorneyes, or magistrates, should not have acquainted the executive government the extent to which the determination of the negroes had gone, all round this district, "not to work after New-Year's day, without being made free," is most astonishing, as it would appear to have been known on almost all the estates that these were the sentiments of the negroes.

I have adjourned the general court-martial at this place for the present, and have cleared the gaol as far as possible.

Since commencing this despatch, I have received accounts of the negroes at Retirement and two other properties having come in bodily.

I will write to your Excellency again in the evening ; but the accounts being so very satisfactory, I would not delay a moment in transmitting them.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Willoughby Cotton, M. G.*

Colonel Campbell has taken a ruler, who came with torches, in the act of setting fire to a property, and when questioned, fully avowed the purpose he came for, and regretted not doing it. I have ordered them to try him instantly, and if found guilty, to approve the court-martial and shoot him. It is the fear of punishment that alone acts upon them to come in ; for depend upon it there is a bad spirit amongst them.

(signed) *W. C.*

No. 31.

Circular to the several Custodes.

Sir,

King's House, July 29, 1831.

I AM commanded by his Excellency the Governor to enclose an extract of a despatch from Lord Goderich, disclaiming in the most distinct manner any intention on the part of His Majesty's Government, to adopt any measures which may have the effect of interfering with the spirit of the resolution of the House of Commons, of 1823, relative to the ultimate extinction of slavery in His Majesty's colonies.

His Excellency trusts that this explicit declaration of His Majesty's Government will remove any alarm or apprehension, which some of the parochial resolutions may have excited in the minds of the community at large. With a view, therefore, of allaying such uneasiness, his Excellency requests that you will give the greatest publicity to the enclosed document.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Wm. Bullock.*

WEST INDIA COLONIES:

No. 32.—(Confidential.)

Sir,

King's House, July 30, 1831.

REFERRING you to my letter of yesterday, his Excellency the Governor has desired me to express to you, in a more private manner, his request that you will endeavour to make yourself acquainted with the general conduct of the slaves in your parish ; and should any circumstance arise to require the adoption of further measures, in order to remove any erroneous impression they may have received of the designs of His Majesty's Government, you will be pleased to give his Excellency the earliest intimation of it.

In making this communication to you, his Excellency desires you will understand that he places the most implicit confidence in the good conduct of the slaves ; and he only suggests a vigilance, which is at all times more or less necessary, but more particularly so when discussions have taken place which are liable to misconstruction and misrepresentation.

I have, &c.

To the several Custodes.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

No. 33.

My Lord,

Blanche, Montego Bay, Jan. 5, 1832.

I AVAIL myself of a despatch just going off to your Lordship, to state how the squadron is now stationed.

Your Lordship has long ere now been informed of the arrival of His Majesty's ship Blanche at this anchorage, with the detachment of troops which we took on board at Port Royal. I found here the Racehorse and Sparrowhawk ; and that the Blossom was at Savannah-la-Mar ; the Firefly at Black River ; and Champion at Port Antonio.

On our first reaching this port, the appearance of the country in flames, and the amount of the very general disaffection and revolt of the negroes, were truly distressing. I am now, however, happy to have it in my power to say, that by the prompt and active measures taken by the Commander-in-chief of the forces, coupled with a well-timed proclamation, holding out mercy to those who would show contrition for their crimes, and immediately return to their duty, the face of affairs has been very much changed for the better, and I am sanguine in believing that in a short time, a continuance of the same active and judicious measures, will produce the most favourable result ; and although the mischief done to the properties and the island cannot be restored, yet, that confidence and tranquillity will enable the planter to recover what may be possible under such unfortunate circumstances.

I have the pleasure to assure your Lordship of the real and cordial co-operation of my naval department with that of the military, and nothing in my power shall be wanting to forward the views of Sir Willoughby Cotton, and the public service, who has kindly on many occasions made me acquainted with his plan of operations. Yesterday I despatched the Sparrowhawk to take up a position to cover a bridge over Great River near —— Hill, which is within view of this anchorage, whilst a particular service is performing.

It may appear to your Lordship that severe measures have been taken by the Commander-in-chief of the forces, as to the number of negroes who have expiated their crimes by the punishment of death ; but I can assure your Lordship that nothing but a sense of public duty could have occasioned that measure, which was absolutely necessary.

Before I close this letter, I may beg to mention to your Lordship, that the arrival of the Racehorse at this anchorage, and the very active and judicious measures taken by Commander Williams, had the effect of restoring confidence to the town, and in fact I might almost say, saved it from the attack by the rebels, who fully intended to burn it.

He landed his seamen and marines, and took charge of defending the several passages into the town, which gave the greatest confidence to the inhabitants.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(signed) *Arthur Farquhar.*

His Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of Belmore.

— No. 8. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Viscount Goderich to the Earl of Belmore.

My Lord,

Downing Street, 1 March 1832.

I HAVE received and have laid before the King, your Lordship's despatch, dated the 6th of January last, containing a report of the insurrectionary movements which had occurred in the island of Jamaica, and of the measures adopted for the suppression of them. I have received His Majesty's commands to acquaint you that, regarding these occurrences with the deepest concern, His Majesty's immediate attention has been devoted to the inquiry, by what means the entire restoration of tranquillity can be most effectually promoted and maintained. It will be my duty in my present despatch to convey to you the result of those deliberations. His Majesty is graciously pleased to approve the decision and promptitude with which your Lordship appears to have acted on this emergency, and he has observed with high satisfaction that you have found so much reason to commend the conduct of the officers in command of His Majesty's naval and military forces, in the performance of the service intrusted to them. I am much indebted to your Lordship for the full detail of these melancholy transactions which your despatch contains; although writing under the pressure of such urgent engagements, and amidst the multitude of confused reports by which your attention must have been distracted, scarcely any topic, illustrative of the subject, appears to have escaped your notice; and if in the following pages I should have occasion to refer to other sources of information, you will have the goodness distinctly to understand that I fully appreciate the difficulty of the task which was imposed upon you, and am aware that a narrative drawn up under such peculiar circumstances, could scarcely be otherwise than incomplete, in some of the less important details.

Amongst the many topics demanding the attention of His Majesty's Government on the present occasion, the first and most important has appeared to them to be, whatever relates to the causes, whether permanent or temporary, of the commotions by which the peace of society in Jamaica has been recently disturbed, and the safety of the colony endangered. In prosecuting that inquiry they have availed themselves of the intelligence and suggestions contained in your Lordship's despatch, nor am I aware that this calamity has been ascribed to any source which has not been indicated in that communication. At the distance at which His Majesty's Government contemplate these events, they would indeed be very unwilling to substitute any conjectural solution of their origin for the explanations which your Lordship's local knowledge has enabled you to supply; and I shall therefore confine the remarks which I am about to make, chiefly, if not exclusively, to the topics in which I have been anticipated by yourself.

The proximate cause of the commotions in the parishes of St. James's and Trelawney, in the months of December and January last, is considered by your Lordship to have been the prevalency, amongst the slaves in those parishes, of the opinion, that some law had been enacted in this kingdom for their general and immediate emancipation, which their owners had studiously concealed, and unanimously disobeyed; and to the general adoption by the slaves of the further opinion, that in asserting their liberty by force, they were secure against the hostility of His Majesty's naval and military forces, if indeed they could not reasonably calculate on their assistance and co-operation. These misconceptions your Lordship traces to the various public discussions on the subject of slavery by which the colony had been agitated. In considering the view which you have thus taken of the subject, I have been led to cast a retrospect over the events of the last nine years, so eventful in the history of the British West Indies.

It is not necessary for me to recapitulate the various negotiations which, since the month of May 1823, have passed between His Majesty's Government and the House of General Assembly of Jamaica. But your Lordship is well aware, that, notwithstanding that protracted correspondence, it was not until the 19th of February 1831, that an Act was passed for regulating the condition of the slaves, to which, consistently with the principles of religious toleration, His Majesty's assent

could be given. In my despatch of the 16th of June last, I communicated to your Lordship that the law would be left to its operation; but I pointed out numerous deviations in the Act of 1831 from the Act passed in December 1826, and which diminished, in some material respects, the privileges which the earlier of those statutes was intended to confer; and while I acknowledged that by passing the Act of 1831 into a law, the colonial slave code would be improved, I added that the Ministers of the Crown could not regard that statute as a satisfactory compliance with the repeated injunctions of His Majesty's Government.

Rumours of the prevalence of great excitement throughout the British West Indies having reached me in the month of May last, I had the honour on the 3d of June to transmit to your Lordship, and to the Governors of the neighbouring colonies, a circular despatch, inclosing a proclamation which you were authorized to issue in His Majesty's name, declaratory of the error of the opinion which was then said to prevail among the slaves, that orders had been sent out for their emancipation, and enjoining on them an entire submission to the laws, and dutiful obedience to their masters.

In your Lordship's despatch of 20th July last, received on the 28th of August, you reported it to be your own opinion that "the slave population were, collectively, sound and well disposed." I extract from that despatch the following important passage: "Accounts in the public papers will inform your Lordship of various parochial meetings which have already assembled, and the resolutions they have adopted. These transactions certainly manifest considerable excitement and alarm, but in my apprehension are more calculated to disturb the minds of the slaves, than any report they may casually have heard of something being intended for their benefit, which their owners endeavour to withhold from them."

I find that on the 29th of July your Lordship's secretary, by your orders, addressed a circular letter to the several custodes of the parishes, inclosing an extract from my despatch, and observing that I had "disclaimed, in the most distinct manner, any intention on the part of His Majesty's Government, to adopt any measure which might have the effect of interfering with the spirit of the Resolutions of the House of Commons of 1823, relative to the ultimate extinction of slavery in His Majesty's colonies." You further expressed your hope, "that this explicit declaration of His Majesty's Government would remove any alarm or apprehension which some of the parochial resolutions might have excited in the minds of the community at large;" and with a view of allaying any such uneasiness, you requested that "the custodes would give the greatest publicity" to the extract from my despatch. In a confidential letter, addressed to the same officers, on the 30th of July, your Lordship further desired them to transmit the earliest intimation "of any circumstance which might arise to require the adoption of further measures, in order to remove any erroneous impression which the slaves might have received of the design of his Majesty's Government;" and you observed, that vigilance was more particularly necessary "when discussions had taken place which were liable to misconstruction and to misrepresentation." Having adopted these very judicious measures, your Lordship deemed it right not to promulgate the Royal Proclamation; and in my despatch of the 7th of September last, I had the honour to convey to you my entire approbation of your conduct.

In your Lordship's despatch of the 4th of August, received on 26th September, you reported "that nothing had occurred to manifest the least uneasiness or excitement among the slaves."

In your despatch of the 6th of September last, which reached this office on the 17th of October, you transmitted to me copies of resolutions adopted at various parochial meetings, which you characterized as "violent and intemperate," observing that committees had been appointed in some parishes for the purpose of corresponding with other districts, and had proceeded so far as to nominate delegates. These resolutions were published in all the journals of the island, and it appears that on most of these occasions the custos of the parish presided. I will not engage in the invidious office of making extracts from the resolutions thus given to the public; nor do I, without sincere reluctance, observe, that in general they declare their allegiance to be no longer due to the government; pray that they may be permitted to seek protection from some other nation; predict

predict a servile war, which they declare will be viewed with pleasure by their enemies; attribute to the government and Parliament of this kingdom designs subversive of their property in the slaves, the execution of which (they maintain) must be resisted by force; and declare the inexpediency of proceeding in any further plans of amelioration, until their title to compensation is distinctly set at rest.

In your Lordship's private letter of the 21st of November, received on 28th of December, you apprised me that a meeting of delegates from the several parishes in the island was appointed to be held at St. Jago de la Vega, where the legislative assembly was then sitting, and that the delegates were to assemble on the 28th of that month. From the same communication I learnt that the House of Assembly had appointed a committee, to "inquire into the cause of the present agitation and recent expressions of public feeling throughout the colony."

The delegates, as further appears from the same letter, accordingly met, and as I understand, were still holding their sittings when the disturbance in the parish of St. James commenced.

Your Lordship, in your despatch of the 6th of January observes, that "the delegates had sent forth an ambiguous declaration, deprecating, as they expressed themselves, the insidious attempts to undermine and render valueless what little remains of their property; but the brink of danger on which they stood formed no part of their deliberations."

On the 21st of December last your Lordship addressed to me a despatch, inclosing an address to yourself from the House of Assembly, in which they declined for the present to enter upon that revision and improvement of their Slave Code, which, in obedience to His Majesty's commands, I had urged upon them in my despatch of the 16th of June.

The subject of improving the condition of the slave population was, however, brought under the consideration of the House of Assembly, by one of the members of that body, in the month of November last, in the form of a motion for the adoption of resolutions against the punishments of women with the whip, and in favour of enabling the slaves to purchase their own freedom. It appears from the public journals of Jamaica, that this proceeding was followed by much excitement, both in the House of Assembly and amongst the public at large, and that the motions were rejected by an overwhelming majority. Although the debate was conducted with closed doors, parts of the discussion were conveyed in the usual form to the public at large, so that while no actual concealment was observed, the attempted secrecy rendered the whole proceeding obnoxious to vague and alarming suspicions.

The references which I have thus had occasion to make to the public journals of Jamaica constrain me to observe, that those publications are marked by the avowal and defence of the most extreme opinions, on either side of the question of negro slavery: while, on the one hand, some of those writers maintain the abstract doctrine of the natural equality of mankind, and the indestructible right of each individual to his personal freedom, their opponents assert, on the other hand, that the property which the owner possesses in his slave is as perfect as is the title to mere inanimate matter; and in support of these contending opinions, I find, on the one side, pictures of the condition of the slaves the most disgusting and appalling, and, on the other, unmitigated reproach against all the advocates for the improvement of their condition.

However little the slaves may in general be capable of reading, or have the opportunity to read, the public newspapers, yet it would be irrational to doubt, that rumours must circulate amongst them of the progress of a debate in which they are so deeply interested, and that they must form many strange and exaggerated conceptions of facts, which are at once so often impressed, and so discoloured, by the prejudices and passions of those who undertake to relate them. From the various documents which accompany your Lordship's despatch, it may with sufficient distinctness be collected, that towards the end of the last year, there prevailed generally amongst the slaves in St. James's and Trelawney, the opinion to which I have already referred, that a law had passed for their emancipation, which their owners had suppressed and disobeyed; and that in asserting their freedom, the slaves might calculate upon the neutrality, if not upon the assistance, of the King's naval

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naval and military forces. I further find that the existence of these misconceptions, known as they were to the resident magistracy and proprietors, was not communicated to your Lordship, although your instructions to the custodes, of the month of July, had anxiously enjoined those officers to convey to you any such intelligence; and lastly, it is but too evident that no effort was made by them to dispel the delusions under which the slaves were thus known to be labouring.

In confirmation of these statements, I especially refer to Sir Willoughby Cotton's despatch of the 5th of January, in which he observes "that the overseers, or attorneys, or magistrates should not have acquainted the executive government with the extent to which the determination of the negroes had gone, all round this district, not to work after New-year's day without being made free, is most astonishing, as it would appear to have been known on almost all the estates that these were the sentiments of the negroes." Mr. Macdonald, the custos of Trelawney, in his despatch of the 4th of January, says, "If other gentlemen had acted with the same kindness, and taken the same pains to explain the real nature of things as I have done, I do not think that this unfortunate insurrection would have been so general."

Again, in his despatch of the 3d of January, Sir W. Cotton informed your Lordship, that "the whole of the men shot yesterday, stated they had been told by white people, for a long time past, that they were to be free at Christmas, and that the freedom order had actually come out from England, but was withheld."

Similar statements abound in the documents before me. Yet it now appears, that, until the 22d of December, your Lordship had been left in such entire ignorance of these facts, that at that late period, you for the first time thought it necessary to publish His Majesty's Proclamation, and in the very letter transmitting it to the custodes, you referred to insubordination as existing only on a single estate, and to "the uninterrupted tranquillity which had hitherto prevailed throughout the island."

I have entered thus at length into these details because they appear to me most important in affording a solution of the causes, to which, in part at least, must be attributed the calamitous events which followed. After exhortations, repeated by His Majesty's Government for more than eight successive years, without effect; after such public meetings as I have mentioned, in every part of the island; after the circulation of the resolutions and public journals already noticed; after the convention of a body of delegates at the capital; and after secret debates in the House of Assembly, followed by the rejection of the measures proposed there for the benefit of the slaves, it must have become to every reflecting man sufficiently evident, that the peace of the island was placed in extreme jeopardy, and that the slaves could scarcely escape the infection of those opinions, which they appear to have adopted. How fraught with danger to the public safety was the prevalence of such opinions among a people so ignorant and so easily excited, it were superfluous to remark. Induced as they had been to suppose that the royal authority was opposed in their favour to that of their owners, and that designs were entertained by the King's Government which the colonial magistracy and proprietors intended to counteract by force, the sense of supposed injustice, combining with a plausible expectation of impunity in resisting it, could scarcely fail to urge them to acts of open rebellion. That, under such circumstances, the proprietors should, in your Lordship's forcible terms, have been heedless "of the brink of danger on which they stood;" that, as the custos of Trelawney remarks, "they should not have taken pains to explain the real nature of things" to the slaves, and that, regardless of your Lordship's repeated admonitions, they should have left you in ignorance of the prevalent state of opinion amongst that class of society, is, as Sir Willoughby Cotton justly observes, "most astonishing." It were wholly irrational to suppose, that any single person in Jamaica, much more that any body of men, could be guilty of the incredible folly and wickedness of deliberately concealing the truth, either from the slaves under their charge, or from the local government, with any settled design of bringing reproach on the measures of improvement so long in agitation. And I can ascribe the apathy which seems to have prevailed to nothing but the ordinary influence of those feelings which render men insensible to any risk, however formidable, with which habit has rendered them familiar.

I readily anticipate the answer which will be made to many of the preceding remarks. The decisions of the House of Assembly—the resolutions at public meetings—the convention of delegates, and the invectives of the colonial journals—were, it will be said, the unavoidable re-action against the unjust and impolitic proceedings of the British Government, and the calumnies of various publications which had proceeded from the press in this kingdom; and it will be represented as a cruel aggravation of that original injustice, to ascribe the calamities which have befallen the colonists to their natural expression of resentment for the wrongs they had sustained, and to the apologies which they had been driven to make in their own defence. The original authors of the injury, and not those who were striving to repel it, ought, it will be said, to be responsible for the natural results of the controversy which they provoked.

His Majesty's Government have no motive for undertaking the defence of any writings which may have been published in this kingdom, on the subject of slavery; for the whole of those works have been given to the world without their sanction or previous knowledge, and on the single and undivided responsibility of persons entirely independent of the government. But to the reproach of injustice and impolicy, with which the government have been so often assailed in the course of this controversy, I have already had occasion to make an answer which it is unnecessary to repeat on the present occasion. I content myself wish referring to the long series of despatches, which, since the month of May 1823, have been written by myself and my predecessors in office, and especially to Mr. Huskisson's despatches of the 22d of September 1827, and the 22d of March 1828, and to my own circular despatch of the 5th of November last. If the justification of the measures of the government contained in those communications be susceptible of a satisfactory answer, I will admit that the course which they have pursued is indefensible. But I must frankly avow my persuasion that no such answer has been, or can be, made. If on reviewing the discussions of preceding years, I find any subject of just regret, it is rather that from an extreme deference to the wishes of the proprietary body, and an anxious desire to exhibit the most studied respect for the privileges of the local legislature, the discussion was prolonged after every reasonable hope of prevailing by mere persuasion, had been disappointed. Convinced, however, that the time had fully arrived for substituting some decisive measure, the nature of which could not be mistaken, for a correspondence leading to no definite result, and liable to dangerous misconceptions, His Majesty's Government resolved to promulgate the Order in Council of the 2d of November last, and to recommend to Parliament those fiscal regulations, which it was the object of my despatch of the 10th of December to announce. It would have been a great advantage, if the Order in Council had reached Jamaica before the commencement of the insurrectionary movements in that month. Had it arrived, the misconceptions prevailing there as to the real designs of His Majesty's Government, would have been effectually dissipated, and it would have been distinctly understood, that whilst considerable improvements in the law were required, no intention was entertained of urging any such abrupt or immediate emancipation, as the slaves are stated to have supposed. The delay, however, is to be ascribed to the earnest desire which His Majesty's Government entertained, of receiving such assistance as might be derived from the promised remarks of the West India body in this kingdom, upon the various provisions of the Order, ere it had yet been finally adopted by His Majesty in Council, and in this view of the case, I can scarcely say, that I regret the time which was consumed in that preliminary deliberation, however much I may wish that the Order had arrived in Jamaica at an earlier period.

The documents which your Lordship has transmitted, ascribe the recent commotions, not merely to the erroneous belief amongst the slaves that some law had set them free, but to the influence of religious instruction, communicated by ignorant teachers, and received by a population unprepared by any previous education, to apprehend the real spirit of Christianity. Mr. Annand, the overseer, who was confined on the estate called Ginger Hill, attributes to the slaves the following language, "that they were obliged to assist their brethren in the work of the Lord"—"that this was not the work of man alone, but that they had assistance from God." A slave named Samuel Sharp, who is designated as a "ruler of the sect of the baptists," is described by the same witness as having said, "that it was but lately that he had begun to know much of religion, but that now he knew, and

I knew as well, that freedom was their right, and freedom they would have." " He said a great deal more, all tending to show that from the religious notions he had imbibed, he conceived that the slaves had a right to be free."

Assuming that Mr. Annand correctly understood, and has correctly quoted, the language of the insurgent slaves, and that they spoke the common sentiments of the whole religious society of which they were members, this part of the general subject becomes of the highest importance. Amongst those who acknowledge the Divine authority of our national faith, there is no room for controversy respecting the duty of imparting the knowledge of Christianity to all mankind, and especially to our own more immediate dependents. However the modes or seasons of instruction may be regulated according to the various circumstances of different classes of society, nothing can justify the systematically withholding from any men, or class of men, a revelation given for the common benefit of all. I could not therefore acknowledge that the slaves in Jamaica could be permitted to live and die amidst the darkness of heathen idolatry, whatever effect the advancing light of Christianity might ultimately have upon the relation of master and slave. Nor am I anxious to conceal my opinion, that a change in this relation is the natural tendency, and must be the ultimate result, of the diffusion of religious knowledge amongst them. For although the great moral virtues of contentment and universal benevolence may be expected to appear amongst a Christian slave population, as the legitimate fruit of Christian principles, yet all probability justifies the belief, and all experience attests the fact, that the increased range of thought, the new habits of reflection, and the more lively perception of the duties owing by their fellow Christians to themselves, to which the converted slaves will attain, will gradually produce in their minds new feelings respecting their servile condition. It is also well worth while to reflect upon the inevitable tendencies of the laws for the abolition of the slave trade. So long as the islands were peopled by the importation of native Africans, who lived and died in heathenism, the relation of master and slave might be expected to be permanent. But now that an indigenous race of men has grown up, speaking our own language and instructed in our religion, all the more harsh rights of the owner, and the blind submission of the slave, will inevitably at some period, more or less remote, come to an end. Deeply impressed with this conviction, His Majesty's Government have endeavoured to make timely preparation for a change which they believe could not be made abruptly, without desolation and general ruin; and the calamity which we have at present to deplore, is but an additional proof of the necessity of acting on so delicate a subject with this provident foresight, and of repressing those unhappy heats and prejudices which have so long obstructed the advance of the indispensable improvement both of the law and state of slavery.

I am not disposed to deny that the work of religious instruction may in some instances have been undertaken by men ill qualified for so arduous a task; and I am even ready, for the sake of argument, to adopt the improbable supposition, that the pure truths of Christianity may occasionally have been adulterated by instructions of a seditious nature. Assume all this to be the case, and what is the proper inference? Not assuredly that the slaves be left to their native superstitions and idolatry, but that renewed exertions should be unremittingly made to diffuse amongst them more just apprehensions of religion, and clearer views of those moral obligations, to the enforcement of which all Christian instruction should be subservient. Guided by these considerations, the Government of this country proposed, and the two Houses of Parliament sanctioned, the enlargement of the Church Establishment in the West Indies on a liberal basis; and in times of no common financial difficulties, that charge has been cheerfully sustained by the people of this kingdom. Under the influence of the same views, many individuals owning property in Jamaica have subjected themselves to a large annual expenditure, to afford religious instruction to their slaves by clergymen of the Established Church, and with a zeal worthy of all praise, have even undertaken the entire charge of missions to their own estates. In a similar spirit, the religious societies connected with the Church of England have devoted much of their funds, and directed the labours of many of their missionaries, to the same field of exertion; and I cannot but indulge the hope, that by adapting her discipline to this new and peculiar state of society, and by inculcating among the slaves those sound views of Christian truth and practice which she habitually recognises, the Church of England will confer upon our West India

India colonies, the inestimable benefit of such religious instruction as may at once satisfy the zeal of the most devout, and the scruples of the most cautious, of the advocates for the conversion of slaves.

It is not, however, merely to a misconception of religious truth, but to the direct instigation of some of the missionaries, that the recent insurrection is ascribed, in some of the documents which your Lordship has transmitted. I have observed with great satisfaction the efforts which you so judiciously made, to guard the persons to whom it would belong to sit in judgment on the missionaries, against the influence of religious prejudices; and I trust that the caution which you have given will effectually prevent the manifestation of any intemperate or hostile spirit towards them, in any subsequent stage of the proceedings. I must distinctly avow my conviction that the improbability of the charge is so extreme, that nothing short of the most irresistible evidence could induce a belief of it. The missionaries who engage in the office of converting the slaves in our colonies, cannot, with charity or in justice, be supposed to be actuated by any views of secular ambition or personal advantage. They devote themselves to an obscure, and arduous, and ill requited service. They are well apprized that distrust and jealousy will attend them, and that the path they have chosen leads neither to wealth nor reputation. If in their case, as in that of other men, motives less exclusively sacred than those which are avowed may exercise some influence on their minds, it were irrational either to feel surprise or to cherish suspicion on that account. The great ruling motive must in general be that which is professed, since in general there is no other advantage to be obtained, than the consciousness of having contributed to the diffusion of Christianity throughout the world. To suppose men who act habitually on such a principle, either so insensible to the restraints of conscience, or so perverted in their estimate of right and wrong, as to foment insurrection and civil war for the subversion of slavery—or to believe them insensible to the extreme danger and suffering in which, by engaging in such an enterprise, they must involve those for whose benefit the contest was to be undertaken, would argue rather a heated and prejudiced mind than a discerning judgment and a correct acquaintance with human character. When, therefore, I consider that no motive can be rationally assigned which should have induced the missionaries to embark in so guilty and desperate an undertaking, I cannot but earnestly trust that the trial of any of their number, who may be charged with a participation in this rebellion, may have been postponed until comparative tranquillity should have succeeded to the first panic: and that such trials may have been conducted, not before a military tribunal, but with all the regular forms of law. Should any such missionary have been convicted, and be awaiting the execution of his sentence on the arrival of this despatch, your Lordship will not permit that sentence to be carried into effect till His Majesty's pleasure can be known.

In referring to the public journals of Jamaica for any material information which they might contain upon this distressing subject, I find it alleged, that the commotions in the parish of St. James were occasioned by an attempt to deprive the slaves of two of their Christmas holidays. To such a statement I must entirely refuse credit, unless, contrary to all reasonable expectation, it should be confirmed by the most decisive authority. I advert to it merely in justice to the persons whom it more immediately affects, and in order to afford your Lordship an opportunity of correcting any misconceptions on the subject, to which, without such explanations, the coincidences which I have remarked on the perusal of your despatch and its enclosures, might give rise.

After a very careful perusal of those documents, I have been able to discover proofs of the commission of only two overt acts of violence before the Christmas holidays, indicative of the rebellious spirit which was subsequently manifested. From Colonel Lawson's letter of the 20th of December, as quoted by your Lordship, I learn that on Friday the 16th of that month, the negroes on the Salt Spring Estate behaved with great insolence to Mr. Grignon, the attorney, and that they assaulted the constables who had been sent to convey the ringleaders to Montego Bay, and deprived them of their pistols and mules. The same gang were found by Colonel Lawson himself, assembled in groups about the buildings, when he learnt that the senior book-keeper had suffered ill treatment, and that his life had been threatened. On the appearance of a party of militia, the whole gang absconded, but

with the exception of six, had returned before the 20th of December. I observe, in passing, that it is most singular that occurrences so important should not have been made known to your Lordship till six days after their commencement. It further appears, from the letter of the custos of Trelawney, of the 23d of December, that the lives of the white people on York Estate, in that parish, had been threatened, and both the trash houses burnt: that the conflagration was the act of incendiaries, rests upon conjecture merely, but upon a conjecture which certainly would seem highly probable. On Saturday the 24th December, all the slaves in this plantation had absented themselves. I find no mention of any other rebellious acts till after the commencement of the Christmas holidays. General Robertson indeed supposes the overseer of Ginger Hill Estate to have been imprisoned by the slaves on the 23d December, but the evidence of Mr. Annand himself fixes the date of that event on Wednesday the 28th. Colonel Grignon's despatch of the 2d January represents that, as early as the 25th, his parties had brought in a few muskets, and that on the 26th, a considerable number of slaves had assembled in different quarters; a fact for which perhaps the general license of Christmas may sufficiently account.

Vide Papers presented on the 6th Dec. 1831.

Your Lordship will find, on reference to my despatch of the 16th June last, a remark on the Slave Act of the preceding February, which I shall here transcribe. "The former statute declares that, for the future, all slaves in the island shall be allowed the usual number of holidays that were allowed at the usual seasons of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. It is now enacted that they shall be allowed the usual holidays of Christmas and Easter. Thus the three annual holidays are reduced to two, and the slave is deprived of the security formerly given to him, that he should enjoy the usual number of such days."

When writing this passage, I was strongly impressed with the importance and danger of such an innovation, knowing that the value of a holiday could not be correctly estimated, except by endeavouring to enter into the feelings of those who were to enjoy or to lose it, and believing that the slaves would attach to this very ancient privilege, an importance which, to persons in a different condition of life, might easily appear exaggerated.

In the year 1831, the 25th of December was a Sunday, and that being a day privileged on other grounds, the slaves, as appears from Mr. Annand's statement, conceived themselves entitled to the three following days; a pretension very reasonable in itself, and to which it appears Mr. Annand assented, on condition that the gang should first turn out. He says, that before the demand was made, he had ordered them to turn out to "work." On referring to the despatch of the custos of Trelawney, of the 28th December (the Wednesday already mentioned), I find the following passage: "I believe nine-tenths of the whole slave population have this morning refused to turn out to work." The refusal of course presupposes the demand; and it must be inferred from the expressions employed by the custos, that the demand was addressed to at least nine-tenths of the population. That the words of the new law might be urged in defence of this innovation, I do not deny; but the impolicy of innovating upon such a subject is but the more strongly impressed on my mind by that circumstance. What effect this attempted abridgement of the usual relaxation of Christmas may have had, or whether it contributed at all to the subsequent revolt, are conclusions which, in my present state of information, I do not feel myself warranted to draw; it is however most important, that your Lordship's attention should be directed to the subject, in order that a ground of discontent so easily removed, may no longer be permitted to exasperate the slaves. The season of Whitsuntide is not very remote, and I greatly dread the effect which may be produced on the minds of the negroes, when they shall for the first time experience the loss of that holiday.

Having thus adverted to all the causes of the insurrection which the papers before me suggest, I proceed to notice some other topics to which they refer.

The offer which Sir Willoughby Cotton made of an amnesty to all the revolted slaves who should immediately return to their duty, was highly judicious. I have not however read without anxiety his declaration, "that it is the fear of punishment that alone acts upon them to come in, for depend upon it there is a bad spirit among them."

Neither is it without some alarm that I have perused Commodore Farquhar's allusion to the "severe measures which have been taken by the Commander-in-chief of the forces, as to the number of negroes who have expiated their crimes by the punishment of death." Some signal instances of punishment were doubtless inevitable; yet I cannot too strongly express my conviction of the danger of rendering the slaves reckless of human life, and of exciting in their minds, by indiscriminate, although merited, punishment, a feeling of injury and a desire of revenge. To reconcile the inexorable demands of justice with the claims of mercy on such an occasion as the present, is indeed a task of extreme difficulty; but no one can deny that the motives for lenity are many and urgent, especially in the case of all those who were neither leaders in these proceedings, nor engaged in the instigation of them. Much allowance is to be made for involuntary ignorance, for misconceptions excited and kept alive by the various methods already noticed, for the intemperance and riot characteristic of the annual holidays at Christmas, and for the effect of slavery in stupifying the mind and debasing the moral character. If indeed any white or free man can be convicted of a guilty participation in these excesses, I acknowledge most freely that lenity in such a case would be wholly misapplied, and that any such offender should be left to experience the whole weight and severity of the law.

The misconduct which Colonel Grignon attributes to some of the troops under his command, will of course not have escaped a more particular inquiry. It will further be necessary to investigate the facts to which the same gentleman refers in his despatch of the 4th January: if he is right, Messrs. Lamont, Dyer and Miller took upon themselves to disobey the orders of the custos in such a manner as to prevent the suppression of the revolt at its commencement. Your Lordship will not fail thoroughly to investigate this part of the case, and to report to me the result for His Majesty's information.

It remains only that I should indicate the measures which it is His Majesty's pleasure that your Lordship should adopt on the present emergency.

Immediately on the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 6th January, His Majesty was pleased to command the attendance of His Privy Council, and by their advice directed that the Proclamation, which I have the honour to enclose, should be promulgated without delay through every part of the colony. It will, I trust, have the effect of convincing the slaves of the error of the opinions which they have been led to form. It will also satisfy all classes of society in Jamaica, that although those measures for the gradual extinction of negro slavery, to which the faith of the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain is so solemnly pledged, will not be abandoned, notwithstanding the impediments which these unhappy disturbances may have raised to the immediate prosecution of them, His Majesty is determined to enforce a due obedience to the law, and to repress and punish all violence and outrage.

I am aware that to persevere in the measures announced in my despatch of 10th December at the present moment, may possibly be described as pregnant with imminent danger. I still however think that His Majesty's Government could not desist from urging the proposed measures of relief, and that the colonial legislature could not reject that proposal, without incurring another danger at least as imminent. Throughout this protracted controversy, the voice of dispassionate reason has, unhappily, been seldom heard or heeded, amidst the violent invectives with which the contending parties have mutually assailed each other. It is at once my duty and my earnest desire, to inculcate on all parties a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, and to warn them of the inevitable calamities which must follow, if interests so momentous shall continue to be made the sport of angry passions. In considering the situation of the gentlemen with whom the legislative authority in Jamaica resides, I cannot forget the difficulties with which they have to contend, nor employ any other language than that of conciliation and respect. Yet I would wish with the utmost earnestness to impress upon them, that they cannot safely overlook the state of society and of public opinion throughout the civilized world, and especially in this kingdom. Were they resident here, they would need no assurance of mine to convince them, that the views of His Majesty's Government on the subject of negro slavery are in harmony with those of Parliament and of the nation at large, and that during a discussion of nine years continuance, men of all

ranks have been progressively acquiring a more uniform and firm conviction of the soundness of those views. It were a fatal mistake to suppose, that the voice of the country at large on this subject is nothing more than the transient clamour of a small but importunate party; yet it is an error into which, at such a distance, the local legislature may not improbably fall.

To claims unjust and unreasonable in themselves, it is doubtless the duty of Government to oppose a stedfast resistance. Even the most moderate and reasonable demands, when enforced by open violence and insurrection, must be resisted, until the dominion of the law has been vindicated and established. But that indispensable duty being performed, it remains that what is reasonably demanded should be conceded with frankness. The present calamity might prove to be but the precursor of disasters still more lamentable, should it fail to convince the local legislature that the time for concession has fully come, and that the opportunity of conceding with dignity and safety may, ere long, be irretrievably lost. Under the influence of erroneous opinions and of a passing excitement, the slaves may indeed have advanced claims which it is impossible to admit; but neither the extravagance with which some hopes may have been indulged, nor the violence with which some designs may have been expressed, can afford any just answer to the more sober and moderate claims which are made on their behalf, and to which with the aid of better information they will probably reduce their own demands.

His Majesty therefore cannot revoke the instructions which your Lordship will have already received on the subject of negro slavery. If, however, the events which have formed the subject of this despatch should have compelled you to suspend the execution of the orders you have received, you have His permission to continue that suspension until the restoration of general tranquillity; but you will take the earliest occasion after internal peace shall have been re-established, for again directing the attention of the Council and the Assembly to the subject.

The anxiety which I should otherwise have felt respecting the immediate tranquillity of the island, is mitigated by finding that Sir Willoughby Cotton had succeeded in re-opening the intercepted communications, and checking the further progress of the revolt, and that neither your Lordship nor that officer had deemed it necessary to seek from His Majesty's Government any addition to the force, either naval or military, which was at your disposal. I have, however, ascertained from the General Commanding in Chief, that the 56th regiment, which recently sailed from this country, must in all probability have reached Jamaica by the present time, and that a considerable number of the 33d regiment, which had been ordered home, have volunteered into the regiments left upon the station. The removal of that regiment will therefore not have been accompanied by any proportionate diminution of force. I further learn from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that Admiral Colpoys, who in the beginning of January was at Barbadoes, was about to proceed forthwith to Jamaica. The slaves will therefore learn, that His Majesty's forces are as adequate, as they are ready, to maintain public tranquillity, and to protect the persons and property of the peaceable inhabitants.

Under such circumstances, His Majesty has not deemed it necessary to direct that any addition should be made to the military force at Jamaica, although he has been pleased to direct that an additional ship of war should forthwith proceed to that station.

I have, &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS it hath been represented to Us, that large bodies of slaves in Our Island of Jamaica have, in open resistance to the laws of Our said island, deserted from the plantations to which they belong, and have set on fire divers buildings, and committed other outrages on such plantations, and have by force and arms opposed Our officers civil and military, and other Our subjects lawfully acting by Our commission and under Our authority for the repression of such outrages, and have otherwise committed divers breaches of the peace, to the great terror and injury of Our faithful subjects within Our said island. Now, We do by this Our Proclamation declare and make known Our settled purpose and resolve, to repress all such lawless and rebellious acts as aforesaid, and to bring to condign punishment the abettors and perpetrators thereof, and by all lawful means to prevent the repetition thereof in future ; and for that purpose, We do strictly charge and command all Governors, Lieutenant-governors, Judges, Justices of the Peace, and other Our officers civil and military, and all other Our faithful subjects whomsoever within Our said island, that according to their several charges and employments, and to the utmost of their respective abilities, they be severally aiding by all lawful ways and means in the repression and prevention of all such lawless and rebellious acts as aforesaid, and in bringing to justice all persons who may have been concerned in the abetting or perpetration thereof. And We do strictly charge and admonish all Our subjects and all others within Our said island whom it may concern, that under pain of Our highest displeasure, they do abstain from joining in any riotous or lawless assemblage within Our said island, and from harbouring or giving countenance, support or encouragement to any person or persons who may have been or may be engaged in any such assemblage or other such unlawful act or proceeding as aforesaid.

And whereas it hath been further represented to Us, that promises of pardon have in Our name been made to such of the persons engaged in the several acts and proceedings aforesaid as should conform to and comply with certain conditions in that behalf prescribed by Our Governor for the time being of Our said island, or by other Our officers civil and military therein acting under the authority, or with the sanction of Our said Governor. Now, We do hereby ratify and confirm every such promise and engagement, and do direct that the same be faithfully observed and kept.

And whereas it hath been further represented to Us, that the slaves in Our said island have been moved to the commission of the offences aforesaid, by the belief that some law had been enacted by Us, with the advice and consent of Parliament, by which supposed law such slaves had become entitled to their freedom : Now, We do hereby declare and make known to all persons lawfully holden in slavery within Our said island, that no law for the emancipation of the slaves therein hath been made by Us with the advice and consent of Parliament, or by any other authority whatsoever. And We do further declare and make known, that whilst We are, as We and Our royal predecessors have ever been, desirous of affording to the slaves within Our said island the most complete and effectual protection against injustice, the free exercise of the right of worshipping Almighty God according to their consciences, and the enjoyment of all such advantages as are compatible with the legal title of their respective owners to their services, We are at the same time bound to punish and repress all acts of insubordination and violence, and all resistance to the authority of the law. And We do hereby solemnly warn and admonish all persons holden in slavery within Our said island, that by engaging in such lawless and rebellious proceedings as aforesaid they will not only expose themselves to the penalties which, by the laws existing in Our said island of Jamaica, the local authorities of the said island are empowered to inflict, but will frustrate or impede the accomplishment of Our gracious designs for their advantage. And We do strictly command and require all such persons as aforesaid, that they do yield a submissive obedience to the laws of Our said island, and to all the lawful commands of their owners, and of all other persons in authority over them.

— No. 9. —

Extract from a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich.*

King's-House, Jamaica, January 16, 1832.

"I HAVE the honour to continue my narrative of the proceedings which have taken place since my last Despatch.

"I then transmitted to your Lordship the copy of a letter from the Custos of Falmouth, in which he stated that a person of the name of Box (who I then imagined belonged to the Baptist Society, but since have learned is a Wesleyan missionary,) had escaped from Falmouth, and I also informed your Lordship I had caused him to be detained here, waiting for further information. Finding, from the reply I received from the custodes, that there was no substantial charge against him, I caused him to be immediately liberated.

"Sir Willoughby Cotton, in a despatch of the 6th instant, stated, that from all the accounts he had received he thought he could assure me that the neck of this widely spread and organized insurrection was broken; that the negroes, although in different places, were continually moving about without any fixed plan. Sir Willoughby added, that the militia regiments of Hanover, Westmorland, St. Ann's, St. James's and Trelawney met his wishes with alacrity upon all occasions, and that he was highly satisfied.

"Major-General Robertson transmits a report (6th January) stating, that he had sent troops to prevent the rebels escaping by the Maroon Tract into Mile Gully. A detachment of the Manchester regiment had visited Spur Tree and the neighbourhood, which were in a state of insubordination; many negroes were taken in the act of rebellion, and four of the ringleaders were shot.

"A despatch (7th January) from Sir Willoughby Cotton states, that he had visited several estates, and reconnoitred those posts which were stated to be occupied by the rebels, some of whom had surrendered themselves, but the greater number had retired to fastnesses in the mountains, where it would be impossible to follow them without very great loss.

"The Commander-in-chief established a strong post in a mountainous position, which effectually overawed those insurgents. He states that General Robertson, Colonel Williams and Colonel Campbell were all at their posts, but complains of the officer commanding the Trelawney regiment having neglected his orders.

"The Major-General mentions, that the rebels had endeavoured to destroy the road of communication between Montego Bay and Lucea, which he had ordered to be re-established. That Mr. Beaumont, a Member of Assembly, and whom he states to have been exceedingly useful and active, had brought in fifty negroes, who were of the greatest use in removing the trees and abbatiss which the insurgents had thrown across the road leading to Catadupa; that on his arrival there, in searching the huts, he found several muskets and a considerable quantity of gunpowder. The overseer of the property of Mocho was found wounded in a cave, where he had been left as dead, and his brother murdered. The maroons were behaving remarkably well, and the militia daily gaining confidence in their own efficiency. A letter from a Major of the Hanover regiment, dated the 9th instant, stated that Flint River, Trial and Orchard Estates in Hanover, were destroyed, and that five fires were then burning on the mountains at the back of the town of Lucea. The head driver at Trial, who endeavoured to protect his master's property, was shot by the rebels; two notorious villains had been taken in arms, and one found burning a house. They were tried, found guilty, and hanged.

"Sir Willoughby Cotton laments the necessity of these examples, but he considered them indispensable. All minor offences the court-martial was to visit by corporal punishment.

"A party of the St. James's regiment were attacked at Anchovy Bottom by a body of armed and other negroes; the officer instantly drove them before him, and killed the chief, who was dressed in uniform, and eight rebels. The number of slaves in this parish is stated at 25,000, including women and children, one half of whom were out, dispersed in various directions; numbers however were hourly returning.

"Major-General Crawford reports (11th January) his detachment having visited Bull-head, Hopeton and Kingsland, in Manchester, which properties were in a state of rebellion; that six of the insurgents were supposed to have been killed in action, two of the ringleaders taken and subsequently shot, which had the instant effect of restoring order.

"A despatch

" A despatch from Sir Willoughby Cotton (11th January) states that the post of Vaughansfield had been occupied without opposition; that the maroons had been sent to reconnoitre the chain of the Cockpits, a remarkably strong post, where the maroons had long maintained themselves during the maroon war; that he in person had visited a great number of estates, and explained to the negroes he found upon them, the nature of the Proclamations which had been issued, and he believed with effect; that upon other estates, where few slaves had come in, he believed many were restrained by fear, and hoped that a good effect would speedily be produced from the encouragement he held out to induce them to return. That of course on many properties where the greatest outrages had been perpetrated the negroes would not immediately come in, but the maroons and a party of riflemen would continue to harass them.

" Captain Galloway, of the 33d regiment, reports from an estate called Lapland, that he had rescued a brown lady and her three daughters on an estate called Bellmont; the buildings had been burnt, and these ladies kept in the greatest terror. At Marchmont also he rescued a Mrs. Holmes, and several other ladies and children. Mr. Holmes, the proprietor of the estate, had been murdered on Sunday. Captain Galloway speaks of Mr. Holmes's murder as having been attended with great cruelty. By the confession of one of the negroes concerned (lately received), it appears that the murder of the women had been in contemplation, and that of the male children was to have taken place on the evening of the day they were rescued.

" Colonel Grignon reports having sent a party to Marchmont on a similar service, under the command of Captain King; and on his return, at an angle of the road near a property called Retrieve, the advanced guard was fired upon by several of the rebels from the negro houses belonging to Mr. Floyd. The attack continued for a short time after the main body came up and were formed, but the rebels were speedily driven from the negro houses. Captain King could not ascertain what number among them were killed or wounded. In this affair he lost two men killed and two wounded.

" Notwithstanding these atrocities, I had the satisfaction to learn by various accounts, and those confirmed by Sir Willoughby Cotton, that from the general appearance of the state of affairs throughout that district, hopes were entertained of returning tranquillity. A great inconvenience now presents itself from overseers and book-keepers of the various properties being all serving with the militia. Sir Willoughby Cotton, with great propriety, suggests that some relaxation of the militia law should be made in their favour, as in their absence it will be impossible to reduce the negroes on the various estates to order.

" Mr. Panton, a gentleman whose name I mentioned in my former despatch (13th of January), called on me on Friday last, and informed me that no doubt remains that the plan of insurrection among the negroes had long been meditated; that on pursuing those who absconded to the woods, in the neighbourhood of Manchioneal, in the parish of Portland, 21 houses were found by the maroons completely ready for occupation, and these placed in such deep recesses of the wood as might probably have long escaped attention. Although all was tranquil in that parish at the period, I caused His Majesty's Proclamation to be issued; and nothing more than the excitement usual amongst slaves at that period of the year had manifested itself; yet, upon its being read on the Sunday following in Manchioneal, the slaves treated it with marked contumely and derision.

" Accounts from Major-general Cox, dated the 14th instant, were received yesterday, stating that a numerous gang of the negroes on an estate, called Unity Valley (but marked Hawthorn's, in Robertson's map), at the south-eastern end of St. Ann's, had refused to work, and otherwise manifested insubordination. He had sent a detachment of the St. Ann's regiment to that estate, under the command of Major Hamilton, and one example had been made of a ringleader. This part of the island had hitherto enjoyed the greatest tranquillity, and therefore such information was quite unexpected. I immediately caused two companies of the St. Catherine's militia, under the command of Colonel Archer, to march from this town to that neighbourhood, in the hope thereby of overawing any further mischief.

" The information I have received from Sir Willoughby Cotton, as well as the Custos of St. James's, leads me to hope that, with the exception of some of the ringleaders and principal offenders, it will not be long before the great body of the negroes may be induced to return to the estates and resume their labours. He reports to me, that he is now obtaining information of the different slaves who are absent, in order that rewards may be offered for the apprehension of the ringleaders."

B A H A M A S.

— No. 10. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Major-Gen. Sir *James Carmichael Smyth*, Bart. K.C.B.
to Viscount Goderich.

Government House, Bahamas,
3d August 1831.

My Lord,

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's circular despatch of the 3d June 1831, respecting the excitement which has been reported to your Lordship to exist in the minds of the slaves in the different West Indian governments. That the slaves are looking forward very anxiously to a considerable amelioration of their condition, in consequence of orders and regulations from home, is (as far as these islands are concerned) unquestionably the case; I am not, however, apprehensive of the slightest tumult or insurrection. The slaves appear to me, as also the coloured population, to have the fullest confidence in His Majesty's Government. The low, ignorant white people are in a much greater state of ferment, and much more likely to be troublesome if they had sufficient means or numbers. I beg respectfully to refer your Lordship to my letter of the 25th May 1831, to the police magistrate (a copy of which, Enclosure 1, was forwarded with my despatch of the 23d June, No. 105), as containing my sentiments not only upon the impolicy of ill-treating their slaves, but of attempting to prevent their complaints from being listened to or investigated. It is now my duty to lay before your Lordship a copy of a second letter, which I have felt it my duty to cause to be addressed to Mr. Duncome (the police magistrate) which will show your Lordship not only the way in which the power vested in the slave-owner is exercised, but the very little support I receive from any of the colonial authorities in my attempts to control it. I only here allude to the subject, and trouble your Lordship with the unpleasant details of my letter to the police magistrate to explain, that although I have not the slightest idea of any insurrection or premeditated resistance to their owners, yet it is impossible to say what the feelings of the slaves might induce them to attempt if they had not the confidence they have in His Majesty's Government, and the hope of the power of the master being subjected to some legal control, and that at no distant period.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Carmichael Smyth.*

Heads of a LETTER to Mr. *Duncome*, the Police Magistrate.

THE Governor has read with attention Mr. Duncome's letter of the 16th instant. He cannot say that Mr. Duncome's conduct, as complained of in Mr. Forbes's letter of the 15th instant, is extenuated by the statement or the reasoning contained in Mr. Duncome's letter. Mr. Duncome says in his letter, that if Mr. Forbes conceived he was under apprehensions from him, the law was open. The Governor must here ask Mr. Duncome if the law was not equally open to him? and inquire if (in the event of a magistrate receiving a letter relative to his official duties which he may not approve of) Mr. Duncome is not aware that there are other and better ways of ascertaining the real merits of the letter, and even punishing the author if he deserve punishment, than by publicly insulting him, and telling him his letter is impertinent? Such conduct in any magistrate would be very unbecoming, but is peculiarly so in the police magistrate, selected to preserve order, prevent brawls, and to maintain the peace. The Governor wishes to add, that he has read copies of both Mr. Forbes's letters to Mr. Duncome respecting the slave Ben Moss. He has also himself received two upon the same subject from Mr. Forbes. He can discover nothing in any of these letters beyond the praiseworthy and natural anxiety of a good-hearted man to save (even at a considerable pecuniary sacrifice) a poor old slave, whom he has known for 12 years, from the pain and ignominy of a cruel flogging. The only word in Mr. Forbes's second letter to

Mr.

Mr. Duncome which is capable of being misunderstood is the word procrastinate. Mr. Forbes, however, does not say that Mr. Duncome illegally, or actuated by improper motives, procrastinated the necessary arrangements for Ben's freedom ; he merely states as a fact, and what appears to have been a fact, "you have procrastinated Ben's valuation until to-morrow."

2. With respect to the magistrate not having authority to interfere between the master and the slave, to which subject Mr. Duncome alludes, in his letter of the 16th instant, the Governor is of opinion that non-interference should be the general rule—interference the exception. Fifty cases, it is evident, may however occur in which any and every magistrate who may be aware of the circumstances is bound to interfere. A slave cannot be punished twice for the same offence ; a slave ought not to be punished by his owner with more than 39 lashes ; a slave ought not to be flogged whilst laceration from a former flogging exists. If a magistrate knowingly permitted the law in any of these points to be infringed, he would be guilty of a gross neglect of duty, and liable to be prosecuted by the Attorney-general. Again, if a magistrate knowingly permitted or sanctioned a female slave in a visible state of pregnancy, or one with an infant at the breast, whose life depends upon the mother's milk, or a sick slave of either sex to be flogged, and death ensued in consequence of such punishment, the magistrate so offending would be a *particeps criminis*, and would be liable to be tried for murder, notwithstanding the consolidated slave law of the colony does not prohibit the commission of such acts. The Governor mentions these last cases in order to show the police magistrate that the enactments of the consolidated slave law are not the only rules for his conduct. In a country like this, where the cat-o'-nine-tails is at the command of men and women, and even minors of either sex, and can be employed upon male and female slaves indiscriminately, without any other ceremony than the will of the owner or person acting for the owner, and where there is no slave protector, the utmost vigilance, activity and intelligence are required on the part of the police magistrate, to prevent as much as he possibly can the abuse of such a dreadful power. To the labour of his slave an owner has an unquestionable and legal right, and in order to maintain himself in that right, the law has armed him with the power of inflicting punishment to a certain extent and under certain restrictions. So long as punishment is only had recourse to for the attainment of its legitimate objects, and is kept within moderate bounds, so long it may be deemed a necessary evil, inseparable perhaps *in toto* from a state of slavery. When, however, a slave-holder is actuated by passion, pique or resentment, and directs the infliction of punishment having no legitimate object in view, every such punishment, although not strictly defined by the law as an act of cruelty, must be so esteemed by every well-principled and honest man. The Governor does not wish to enter into the case of the slave Ben Moss, nor to try its merits by the foregoing rules, because, if the statements which have been laid before him are substantiated by evidence, that case will unquestionably undergo a legal investigation. He will merely confine himself upon the present occasion to one observation respecting the case submitted by Mr. Duncome and the commissioners of the workhouse to the Attorney-general. In that case, the offer for the purchase of the slave's freedom is supposed to have been made subsequent to the order for punishment ; whereas, in the case of Ben Moss, if the Governor has been correctly informed (and which appears one of the worst features of the case,) the order for the punishment of Ben was given after the offer of the purchase of his freedom. The sale of the slave was consequently *in transitu* ; and as nothing on the part of the owner could prevent Ben from being a free man the next day, the conduct of the attorney of the owner, in availing himself of almost literally the last hour of his expiring authority to inflict 39 lashes upon a poor worn-out old man, it is to be hoped for the honour of humanity, whether legal or not, will meet with but few admirers, and still fewer imitators.

3. Before the Governor concludes, he wishes to draw Mr. Duncome's attention to one or two other cases, in which he has not been altogether pleased with his conduct. In the case of the unfortunate Phoebe Wildgoos, Mr. Duncome, as local inspector of the gaol, must have known of her first flogging at the gaol, although Mr. Duncome, in his letter of the 11th June, states that Mr. Wildgoos never informed him of his intention to have her flogged a second time at the workhouse ; that no reference was made to him as to the legality or propriety of the intended second flogging ; and that he is not aware that any sentiments expressed by him sanctioned or countenanced the transaction ; still he confesses the circumstance was

mentioned by Mr. Ransom. Mr. Wildgoos ordered the punishment on the 6th of June ; it was not carried into execution till the morning of the 8th, not until Mr. Ransom, the supervisor, had seen and conversed with the police magistrate upon the subject. The inference in nine cases out of ten would be, that the supervisor was influenced in his conduct by the sentiments or opinion of the police magistrate. In consequence of Mr. Duncome's assertions, as contained in his letter of the 11th June, the Governor is bound to believe the contrary. Mr. Duncome, however, took no steps to interfere or to prevent the second punishment. A magistrate does not do his duty who sits quietly in his office, and, provided the letter of the law is not infringed, allows acts to be perpetrated around him at which humanity shudders. Mr. Duncome ought to have communicated with Mr. Wildgoos, and to have pointed out to him that the poor girl in question had been but very lately flogged ; that she had not been out of confinement since the infliction of her first flogging, and consequently could not have done anything to have deserved a second punishment of so severe and terrible a nature. These, and many other similar arguments, would have occurred to any active-minded man, anxious to prevent such a cruel proceeding as the flogging of this unfortunate female a second time. If Mr. Wildgoos had still insisted upon his legal right to flog his female slave as often as he thought proper, Mr. Duncome might have started doubts as to the legality of flogging a slave a second time, without having been once released from confinement ; have called a meeting of the commissioners of the workhouse, and with their concurrence, have referred the case to the Attorney-general for his legal opinion. As it was, Mr. Duncome knew of the intended second flogging of Phœbe Wildgoos before it was carried into execution, and not only made not any the slightest effort to prevent it, but allowed it go on perfectly as a matter of course.

4. A few years ago a female slave, named Polly Prudden, was returned as having been flogged by order of her young master. The young master was a boy of only 14 years of age. Upon making some inquiry, this was stated to have been a mistake, and that the boy only brought the message, but the authority emanated from his sister, who, being a few months more than 17 years of age, could legally give the order. Why was this story left to be investigated by the Governor ? Why did not the police magistrate, of his own accord, make some inquiry into the circumstance of a female being stated to have been flogged by order of a boy ?

Christina, a female slave, was punished with 24 lashes very lately, and (as stated in the Return) by order of Mrs. Kennett, a woman of bad character. Upon referring to the Slave Register, Christina appears to belong to Mr. Turner, and consequently Mrs. Kennett could not legally order any punishment. Upon further investigation, Mr. Turner says the punishment was by his order. Why was this apparent irregularity not noticed and inquired into by the police magistrate ? No irregular proceedings are noticed, excepting they are discovered by the Governor himself, and sent to the police-office to be inquired into. There are very many cases similar to the two quoted, which (to say the least of them) ought to have been investigated by the police magistrate of his own accord.

5. There is nothing the Governor has more at heart ; there is no part of his instructions he is more anxious to carry into effect than the abolishing the flogging of female slaves *in toto*, and the diminishing, as much as may be found practicable, punishment generally. The Governor has a right to co-operation and assistance from all magistrates named by His Majesty in the commission of the peace, but particularly so from the police magistrate, selected and appointed from time to time by the Governor himself. The Governor asks no person to act in any way contrary to the existing laws ; but vigilance and an active humanity in the discharge of their duty he expects will be shown by all the subordinate officers of this government.

(signed) *J. Carmichael Smyth.*

Government House, 20 July 1831.

B A R B A D O S .

— No. 11. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Lieut.-Gen. Sir *James Lyon*, G.C.B. to Viscount *Goderich*.

Government House, Barbados,
23d July 1831.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's circular despatch, dated 3d June last, relating to the discontent which prevailed some little time ago amongst the slaves, together with a copy of a Proclamation which was issued in the year 1824 on a similar occasion; and I have the happiness to report to your Lordship, that no one circumstance has occurred since I last had the honour of addressing you on the subject, calculated to excite the least alarm as to the peaceable intentions of the slaves in this island; indeed the mutual confidence usually subsisting betwixt owner and slave seems again to be completely and perfectly restored. Your Lordship will perceive therefore that no necessity exists for issuing the Proclamation in question, and I shall accordingly abstain from doing so.

I have, &c.

(signed) *James Lyon.*

D O M I N I C A .

— No. 12. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Mr. President *Lockhart* to Viscount *Goderich*.

Government House, Dominica,
July 21st, 1831.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch circular, dated 3d June, and am most happy to acquaint your Lordship that it has been unnecessary to give any publicity whatever to the Proclamation of His Majesty, which accompanied the despatch, as the slave population of this island is perfectly quiet; and during the recent disturbances at Martinique, Barbados and Antigua, not the slightest symptom of discontent or dissatisfaction was shown by them in any part of this island.

I have, &c.

(signed) *J. P. Lockhart,*
President and Commander-in-Chief.

G R E N A D A .

— No. 13. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Major-Gen. Sir *James Campbell*, K.C.B. to Viscount *Goderich*.

Government House, Grenada,
22d July 1831.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's circular of the 3d June 1831, with a copy of a Proclamation to be issued in case the excitement in the minds of the negroes, of which your Lordship had received information, still continued.

continued. I beg leave to refer your Lordship to my despatches of the 4th April numbered 20, and 3d May, numbered 23, on this subject, and to inform your Lordship, that the negroes in this island, from every information that I have been able to collect, are peaceable and quiet; and therefore, pursuing the line of conduct pointed out by your Lordship, I shall withhold this Proclamation, unless some future necessity should compel me to issue it, which at present I do not anticipate.

It is most satisfactory to the colony to know from your Lordship that there does not exist on the part of His Majesty's Government any purpose to disturb, by abrupt and hasty measures, the present relations of society in the colonies; and I shall take every opportunity of denying any such purpose on the part of His Majesty's Government, pursuant to your Lordship's directions.

I have, &c.
(signed) James Campbell.

S T. C H R I S T O P H E R'S.

— No. 14. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Major-Gen. Maxwell, C.B. to Viscount Goderich.

My Lord,

Nevis, 28th July 1831.

IN reply to your circular letter, dated the 3d ult., I have the pleasure to acquaint your Lordship that I am not aware of any excitement prevailing in the minds of the slaves belonging to this government that will render it necessary to issue any Proclamation for the purpose set forth in your Lordship's despatch; and it is with sincere satisfaction that I intimate to you the quiet, orderly demeanour of the negro population of these islands.

I have, &c.
(signed) Chas. W. Maxwell.

S T. V I N C E N T.

— No. 15. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Sir George F. Hill, Bart. to Viscount Goderich.

My Lord,

St. Vincent, 20th July 1831.

I HAVE had the honour of receiving your Lordship's despatch, dated the 3d of last month, inclosing His Majesty's Proclamation, with your detailed instructions how far, or in what manner, I was to publish it or not, upon it.

I am much gratified to acquaint your Lordship that the latitude you have given me of not acting upon it in any manner, if I deemed it unnecessary, I have taken to that extent.

During the late disturbances in Martinique and Antigua, and the apprehensions in Barbados, there was not in this colony any symptom of excitement or discontent amongst the slaves. I have therefore availed myself of the confidence reposed in me, and abstained from making any address to them.

I have however used (I trust discreetly), that part of your Lordship's communication which, whilst it expresses the ultimate view and determination of His Majesty's Government respecting the ultimate abolition of slavery altogether, yet gives assurance that there is no intention of doing so hastily, nor rashly to disturb the present relations which exist amongst society in the colonies.

I have succeeded in making the impression which your Lordship seems to desire upon the minds of many of the most prominent characters here, that immediate un-
conditional

conditional manumission was not in contemplation of Government; and I here repeat what I presumed to express in another despatch to your Lordship of this date, that I contemplate little difficulty in accomplishing the abolition of slavery, undertaken on the principles laid down in your despatch of the 4th of June.

I have, &c.

(signed)

G. F. Hill.

T O B A G O.

— No. 16. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Major-general *Blackwell, C.B.*, to Viscount *Goderich.*

My Lord,

Tobago, July 19th, 1831.

IN acknowledging your Lordship's circular despatch of the 3d June last, with the copy of the Proclamation of 1824, I have the honour to acquaint you that from the perfect state of tranquillity which prevails throughout this colony amongst the negro population, there can be no occasion whatever for making use of it in this command; and at the same time I can with confidence assure your Lordship that I have reason to believe no illusion whatever has entered into the minds of the negroes likely to disturb their tranquillity, in consequence of the late Parliamentary proceedings.

I shall not fail, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions, in using all my endeavours to counteract any misunderstanding which may exist in the minds of those of free condition as to the intentions of His Majesty's Government with regard to the slave question, and to re-assure them of His Majesty's constant solicitude for their safety and welfare; and that whilst pursuing the ultimate object of the extinction of slavery, no purpose exists on the part of His Majesty's Government to disturb, by abrupt and hasty measures, the relations of society in the colonies.

I have, &c.

(signed)

Nath. Blackwell,

Governor.

T R I N I D A D.

— No. 17. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Colonel Sir *C. F. Smith* to Viscount *Goderich.*

My Lord,

Trinidad, 13th July 1831.

I do not perceive any disposition or movement amongst the slaves in this colony to induce me at present to republish, even in a modified shape, the Proclamation of 1824, a copy of which was transmitted with your Lordship's circular despatch of 3d ultimo.

The slaves have an unaccountable facility in obtaining partial and generally distorted information whenever a public document is about to be received which can in any way affect their condition or station; hence, at the period your Lordship's No. 2, of 2d December last came to hand, I observed strong indications of discontent, which I am happy to state have wholly disappeared.

I have, &c.

(signed)

C. F. Smith.

BRITISH GUIANA.

— No. 18. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Major-general Sir *B. D'Urban*, K. C. B., to Viscount *Goderich*.

King's House, British Guiana,
1st August 1831.

My Lord,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's circular despatch of the 3d June last, the spirit and tenor of which I will very carefully observe and follow, if there should be occasion.

Hitherto, so far as I can learn, the mind of the slave population here is tranquil and undisturbed, but I cannot be without apprehensions that the late proceedings of some of the colonists, as reported to your Lordship, in my despatches Nos. 5, 6 and 7 of this date, may soon alter this state of their disposition.

It is but too probable indeed, since the slaves will now have *real cause* for that upon the suspicion of which they acted in 1823: "That the colonists have obstructed the benefits which His Majesty had intended for them."

I shall endeavour to counteract all dangerous impressions as early as I am aware of them, by the means held out in your Lordship's despatch, and by all others which circumstances may suggest to me as most expedient.

I have sent the "secret instructions," of which the Enclosure is a copy, to the country magistrates.

I will not fail to use the tenor and assurances of the concluding passage of the despatch as I may find fit occasions for doing so.

I have, &c.
(signed) *B. D'Urban.*

(Secret and Confidential.)

Sir, King's House, 25th July 1831.

THE discussions which, unhappily for the colony, have been lately carried on by a certain portion of the inhabitants with so little reserve, or apparent care for their probable consequences (in the midst too of great present unquietness among the slaves in some other colonies) cannot be regarded without just cause of alarm, as to the effects which they directly tend to produce in the minds of the negro population, seeing that these discussions bear upon the very face of their argument a determination to impede and weaken the provisions of protection to the slave, which His Majesty in his Council has thought fit to enact.

It is not to be supposed that the slaves will be insensible to this which touches them so nearly; and it is reasonable to apprehend that such a cause must have a corresponding effect, and that jealousy, discontent, ill feeling, and too probably actual disorder among them will be the result.

It becomes my duty, therefore, confidentially, but very earnestly to call your attention to this critical state of the colony, and to request that you will not cease to exercise (*with as little appearance*, however, of doing so as possible) your most vigilant observation of the temper and disposition of the slave population within the district over which your magistracy extends.

If at any time you should unfortunately see cause for believing that there is a discontented spirit generally arising among them, you will be pleased to report to me without delay, direct and confidentially, addressing your letter (as this is addressed to you) in a private cover within an official one, and taking the surest means that it may forthwith be delivered to me.

I have, &c.
(signed) *B. D'Urban.*

P. S.—You will be so good as to acknowledge the receipt of this, and you will of course be aware that these instructions are in no respect to interfere with any reports or communications which you would otherwise make to the fiscal of your district.

To _____
Deputy Fiscal of _____.

S T. L U C I A.

— No. 19. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Lieut.-colonel Bozon to Viscount Goderich.

Government Office, Saint Lucia,

25th July 1831.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 27th of May, conveying a Proclamation, which, in case of necessity is to be issued in this island, for the information of the slave population and others, I beg to assure your Lordship, that taking into consideration the very tranquil and peaceable disposition of the slaves in this colony, I have not deemed it necessary to occasion any excitement in their minds by issuing the Proclamation in question.

I have, &c.

(signed)

M. A. Bozon, L^t-Col.Adm^g the Gov^t.

— No. 20. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from Viscount Goderich to the Governors of the West India Colonies, (with the exception of Jamaica and Honduras.)

(Circular.)

Sir,

Downing-street, 10th March 1832.

LONG before you can receive this despatch, intelligence will have reached you of the insurrection of the slaves in the island of Jamaica. The reports from that colony concur in attributing this calamitous event to the general prevalence among the slaves of an opinion that some law for their emancipation had been enacted in this kingdom, which their owners had not only disobeyed, but suppressed. I abstain from entering in this place into an inquiry into the causes by which this error was generated and kept alive. It is enough to say, that for several months before the insurrection, various persons of rank and authority in the island had, at parochial and other meetings, and by resolutions inserted in the public journals, attributed to the British Government the design of subverting the institutions of the West India colonies, and of destroying the property of the owners in their slaves. In these discussions many intemperate expressions appear to have been used; and to whatever degree the ardor of controversy may apologize for such mis-statements, the imprudence of giving such general circulation to them is but too evident.

I have no particular reason to suppose that the slaves within your government have been brought within the reach of any such exaggerated and unfounded representations of the designs of His Majesty or of Parliament; or that they partake of the delusive opinions by which that class of society in Jamaica have been so fatally misguided. Yet as the existence of such misconceptions is not impossible, and as the excitement which unhappily prevails throughout the West Indies may have contributed to foster them, I transmit to you the inclosed copy of a Proclamation which, by the advice of His Privy Council, His Majesty has ordered to be promulgated throughout Jamaica, in the hope that it may contribute to convince the slaves of that island of the error into which they had fallen. If any tendency to insubordination should manifest itself in the colony under your government, you will publish this Proclamation in His Majesty's name, with such alterations as may be necessary for adapting it to the actual state of affairs there.

Vide page 43.

You will also make it your immediate and diligent study to impress on the minds of the proprietary body, the danger of publicly ascribing to the Legislature of this kingdom resolutions which it has never adopted, or to His Majesty's Government designs which they have so distinctly and repeatedly disavowed. Of course I do not deprecate such censures, however ardent or severe, on account of any injury

they may be calculated to inflict on His Majesty's Government. Were their own reputation alone concerned, they would await the result of these discussions without anxiety, in the full assurance that even those who now most loudly condemn their measures, will, ere long, acknowledge that they were dictated by just views of the interest both of the owners and of the slaves, and by a genuine concern for the welfare of both. But it is the reaction of such unmeasured statements on their authors which excites my apprehension. The slaves will understand literally representations which have been highly coloured, with a view to their controversial effect, and will really believe that the law has set them free, if they are informed that His Majesty and Parliament have attempted to subvert the proprietary rights of their owners.

You will also enjoin upon every magistrate within your government to convey to you the earliest intelligence, not only of any movements indicating a rebellious spirit, but of the prevalence of any opinions of a dangerous tendency among the slaves. Every effort must be made to check the progress of such errors, which if permitted to take undisturbed possession of the minds of the negroes, may (as recent experience has too fully proved) involve them and their owners in a common and overwhelming calamity.

I have, &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

WEST INDIA COLONIES:
SLAVE INSURRECTION.

RETURNS to Addresses to His MAJESTY,
dated 9 and 15 March 1832;—*for,*

COPIES of DESPATCHES and CORRESPONDENCE
between Viscount Goderich and the Governors
of the *West India Colonies*, respecting the recent
REBELLION amongst the SLAVES in *Jamaica*.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
16 March 1832.
